Basic information

2015/2063(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Prevention of radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations **Subject** 7.30.20 Action to combat terrorism	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	DATI Rachida (PPE)	26/02/2015
	Shadow rapporteur GOMES Ana (S&D) KIRKHOPE Timothy (ECR) PAGAZAURTUNDÚA Maite (ALDE) SPINELLI Barbara (GUE/NGL) LAMBERT Jean (Verts/ALE) WINBERG Kristina (EFDD)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	TANNOCK Timothy Charles Ayrton (ECR)	02/03/2015
CULT Culture and Education	DZHAMBAZKI Angel (ECR)	04/05/2015

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Migration and Home Affairs	AVRAMOPOULOS Dimitris

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
12/03/2015	Committee referral announced in Parliament		

19/10/2015	Vote in committee		
03/11/2015	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0316/2015	Summary
24/11/2015	Debate in Parliament		
25/11/2015	Decision by Parliament	T8-0410/2015	Summary
25/11/2015	Results of vote in Parliament		
25/11/2015	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2015/2063(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Strategic initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/8/02968

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE551.967	01/06/2015	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE560.923	03/07/2015	
Committee opinion	CULT	PE557.258	17/09/2015	
Committee opinion	AFET	PE560.548	18/09/2015	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0316/2015	03/11/2015	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0410/2015	25/11/2015	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2016)105	05/04/2016	

Prevention of radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations

2015/2063(INI) - 03/11/2015 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted an own-initiative report by Rachida DATI (EPP, FR) on the prevention of radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations.

The report noted that more than **5000** European citizens have joined terrorist organisations and other military formations in Iraq and Syria. This phenomenon is speeding up and taking on significant proportions in certain Member States. The recent terrorist attacks highlight the security threat which is posed by the presence and movement of these **'foreign' fighters** who are often EU nationals, in Europe and in its neighbourhood. Given the acceleration of this phenomenon, the aim of this report is to make **recommendations for a European strategy** for preventing radicalisation and recruitment of EU citizens by terrorist organisations.

The report focused on the following issues:

European added value in the prevention of terrorism: emphasising that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any specific religion, nationality or civilisation, the report called for a comprehensive study on the effectiveness of national and EU measures aimed at preventing and combating terrorism. The Commission is invited to:

- establish as a priority an **action plan to implement and evaluate the EU strategy for combating radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism**, on the basis of the exchange of best practice and the pooling of skills within the European Union, the evaluation of measures undertaken in the Member States and cooperation with third countries and international organisations;
- contribute to and support the development by Member States of an **effective and intensive communication strategy** on preventing the radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens and of non-EU nationals residing in the EU by terrorist organisations.

Member States should coordinate their strategies and share the information and experience at their disposal, to implement good practices at both national and European level, to cooperate with a view to taking new steps in combating radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism.

Preventing violent extremism and terrorist radicalisation in prisons: stressing that prisons remain one of several environments which are a breeding ground for the spread of radical and violent ideologies and terrorist radicalisation, the report called on the Commission to **encourage the exchange of best practices among the Member States** in order to counter the increase of terrorist radicalisation in Europe's prisons and called on Member States to take immediate action against **prison overcrowding**.

The Commission is called upon to propose **guidelines** based on best practices on measures to be implemented in European prisons aimed at the prevention of radicalisation and of violent extremism, on a basis of full respect for human rights. Members encouraged the establishment of **educational programmes with adequate funding** in European prisons in order to promote critical thinking, religious tolerance, and reintegration into society of inmates.

Preventing online terrorist radicalisation: recalling that the internet and social networks are significant platforms for the fuelling of radicalisation and fundamentalism, Members underlined the role of **education and public awareness campaigns** in preventing radicalisation online. They called for an **effective strategy for the detection and removal of illegal content** inciting to violent extremism, while respecting fundamental rights and freedom of expression, and in particular for contributing to the dissemination of **effective discourse** to counter terrorist propaganda.

The competent authorities should ensure that websites that incite hatred are **monitored more strictly**. Members supported the introduction of measures enabling all **internet users to easily and quickly flag illegal content** circulating on the internet and on social media networks and to report it to the competent authorities, including through hotlines. Every Member State should set up a **special unit** tasked with flagging illegal content on the internet and with facilitating the detection and removal of such content. Members called for a reinforcement of the tools available to the EU to **combat cybercrime**.

Preventing radicalisation through education and social inclusion: Members recalled the **crucial role that schools play** in helping to promote integration within society and develop critical thinking, and to promote non-discrimination. They called on the Member States to encourage educational establishments to provide **courses and academic programmes** aimed at strengthening understanding and tolerance, especially with regard to different religions, the history of religions, philosophies and ideologies. They stressed the need to **teach fundamental values and democratic principles** of the Union such as human rights.

Member States are urged to ensure that **educational programmes on internet use exist in every school**. Furthermore, teachers should be empowered to take an active stand against all forms of discrimination and racism.

The report highlighted the importance of combining deradicalisation programmes with measures such as **establishing partnerships with community representatives, investment in social and neighbourhood projects** aimed at disrupting economic and geographical marginalisation, and mentoring schemes for alienated and excluded young people considered at risk of radicalisation.

Members considered it vital to set up an **alert system** for assistance and guidance in every Member State which would allow families and community members to obtain support or to easily and swiftly flag the development of sudden behavioural change that might signal a process of terrorist radicalisation or an individual's departure to join a terrorist organisation.

Stepping up the exchange of information on terrorist radicalisation in Europe: whilst reiterating their commitment to work towards the finalisation of an **EU directive on passenger name records (PNR) by the end of 2015**, Members suggested that a holistic, ambitious and comprehensive strategy on counterterrorism and the fight against organised crime, involving foreign policy, social policy, education policy, law enforcement and justice, is required.

The report insisted on the absolute necessity of stepping up the expedient and effective exchange of relevant information between the law enforcement authorities in the Member States and between Member States and the relevant agencies, in particular by optimising the use of and contributions to the Schengen Information System (SIS) and Visa Information System (VIS).

Strengthening deterrents against terrorist radicalisation: Members believed that measures aimed at preventing the radicalisation of European citizens and their recruitment by terrorist organisations will not be fully effective until they are accompanied by an **effective, dissuasive and articulated range of criminal justice measures** in all Member States. Through effectively criminalising terrorist acts carried out abroad with terrorist organisations, Member States will equip themselves with the tools needed to eliminate terrorist radicalisation among European citizens.

Members called for **reinforced capacities for Eurojust's Coordination Centre**, which should play a critical role in promoting the joint action of Member States' judicial authorities in the collection of evidence and enhance the effectiveness of prosecutions of crimes related to terrorism. They also called for the EU to work on the setting-up of **judicial and law enforcement cooperation agreements with third countries** to facilitate the collection of evidence in said countries, provided that fundamental rights are safeguarded by all parties.

Preventing the departure and anticipating the return of radicalised European citizens: Members reiterated that the EU should **improve the effectiveness of its external border controls**, whilst making good use of existing instruments such as the SIS and the VIS. Member States should share good practices with regard to exit and return checks and the freezing of financial assets of citizens, in the context of preventing citizens from taking part in terrorist activities in conflict areas in third countries and of how to manage their return to the EU.

Strengthening links between internal and external security in the EU: Members stressed the vital importance of the EU establishing close **cooperation with third countries**, **notably transit countries and destination countries**, in order to be able to identify EU citizens and non-European residents leaving to fight for terrorist organisations or returning thereafter.

The EU should increase its cooperation with regional partners in order to **curb arms trafficking**, targeting in particular the countries where terrorism originates, and to follow closely the export of armaments that could be exploited by terrorists. Members also called for foreign policy tools and engagement with third countries to be strengthened with a view to **countering the financing of terrorist organisations**.

Dismantling terrorist networks: the report underlined that money laundering, tax evasion and other fiscal crimes are in some cases major sources of terrorism funding. **Tracking and combating crimes affecting the EU's financial interests** must therefore be a priority.

Members called for a **harmonised approach** to the definition as a criminal offence of hate speech, online and offline, whereby radicals incite others to disrespect and violate fundamental rights.

Prevention of radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations

2015/2063(INI) - 25/11/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 548 votes to 110 with 36 abstentions, a resolution on the prevention of radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations.

Parliament noted that **more than 5000 European citizens have joined terrorist organisations** and other military formations, particularly ISIS (Da'esh), Jahbat al-Nusra and others outside the European Union, especially in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The recent terrorist attacks in France, Belgium, Tunisia and Copenhagen highlight the **security threat** which is posed by the presence and movement of these 'foreign' fighters who are often EU nationals, in Europe and in its neighbourhood.

1) European added value in the prevention of terrorism: Parliament **condemned the terrorist attacks** that killed and wounded hundreds of people in Paris on 13 November 2015, highlighting once more the urgent need for **coordinated action by the Member States and the European Union to prevent radicalisation and fight against terrorism**.

At the same time, emphasising that terrorism cannot be associated with any specific religion, nationality or civilization, it **condemned the use of stereotypes and xenophobic and racist discourse and practices** by individuals and collective authorities which, directly or indirectly, link the terrorist attacks to the refugees who are currently fleeing their countries in search of a safer place, escaping from war and acts of violence which occur in their home countries.

Parliament invited the Commission to:

- **establish as a priority an action plan to implement and evaluate the EU strategy for combating radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism**, on the basis of the exchange of best practice and the pooling of skills within the European Union, the evaluation of measures undertaken in the Member States and cooperation with third countries and international organisations on a basis of full respect for international human rights conventions
- contribute to and support the development by Member States of an **effective and intensive communication strategy** on preventing the radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens and of non-EU nationals residing in the EU by terrorist organisations.

Members called on Member States to **coordinate their strategies** and share the information and experience at their disposal and to cooperate with a view to taking new steps in combating radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism. They stressed the importance of **strengthening cross border cooperation** among law enforcement authorities to this regard, and of providing adequate resources and training to police forces working on the ground.

2) Preventing violent extremism and terrorist radicalisation in prisons: stressing that prisons remain one of several environments which are a breeding ground for the spread of radical and violent ideologies and terrorist radicalisation, Parliament called on the Commission to **encourage the exchange of best practices among Member States** in order to counter the increase of terrorist radicalisation in Europe's prisons and called on Member States to take immediate action against **prison overcrowding**.

The Commission was called upon to propose **guidelines** based on best practices on measures to be implemented in European prisons aimed at the prevention of radicalisation and of violent extremism, and to consider the **separation of inmates recruited by terrorist organisations** from other inmates as a possible measure to prevent radicalization.

Members encouraged the establishment of **educational programmes** with adequate funding in European prisons in order to promote critical thinking, religious tolerance, and reintegration into society of inmates.

3) Preventing online terrorist radicalisation: recalling that the internet and social networks are significant platforms for the fuelling of radicalisation and fundamentalism, Members underlined the **role of education and public awareness campaigns in preventing radicalisation online.** They called for an **effective strategy for the detection and removal of illegal content** inciting to violent extremism, while respecting fundamental rights and freedom of expression, and in particular for contributing to the dissemination of effective discourse to counter terrorist propaganda.

Competent authorities should ensure that websites that incite hatred are **monitored more strictly**. Member States should consider **legal actions, including criminal prosecutions**, against internet and social media companies and service providers which refuse to comply with an administrative or judicial request to delete illegal content or content praising terrorism on their internet platforms. Refusal cooperate should be considered **an act of complicity** that can be equated to criminal intent or neglect.

Members supported the introduction of measures enabling all internet users to easily and quickly flag illegal content circulating on the internet and on social media networks and to report it to the competent authorities, including through hotlines. Every Member State should set up a special unit tasked with flagging illegal content on the internet and with facilitating the detection and removal of such content. Members called for a reinforcement of the tools available to the EU to combat cybercrime.

4) Preventing radicalisation through education and social inclusion: Parliament recalled the crucial role that schools play in helping to promote integration within society and develop critical thinking, and to promote non-discrimination. It called on the Member States to encourage educational establishments to **provide courses and academic programmes aimed at strengthening understanding and tolerance**, especially with regard to different religions, the history of religions, philosophies and ideologies. It stressed the need to teach fundamental values and democratic principles of the Union such as human rights.

Member States are urged to ensure that **educational programmes on internet use exist in every school.** Furthermore, teachers should be empowered to take an active stand against all forms of discrimination and racism.

Parliament recommended:

- combining deradicalisation programmes with measures such as establishing partnerships with community representatives, investment in **social and neighbourhood projects** aimed at disrupting economic and geographical marginalisation;
- engaging in an **intercultural dialogue** with the various communities, with a view to helping achieve better understanding and prevention of radicalisation;
- drawing attention to the issue of the **training of religious leaders** – which should take place in Europe where possible - with regard to preventing incitement to hatred and violent extremism in places of worship in Europe, and ensuring that those leaders share European values;
- setting up an **alert system** for assistance and guidance in every Member State which would allow families and community members to obtain support or to easily and swiftly flag the development of sudden behavioural change that might signal a process of terrorist radicalisation or an individual's departure to join a terrorist organisation;.

5) Stepping up the exchange of information on terrorist radicalisation in Europe: whilst reiterating their commitment to work towards the finalisation of an **EU directive on passenger name records (PNR)** by the end of 2015, Parliament suggested that a holistic, **ambitious and comprehensive strategy on counterterrorism** and the fight against organised crime, involving foreign policy, social policy, education policy, law enforcement and justice, is required.

The resolution insisted on the absolute necessity of stepping up the expedient and effective exchange of relevant information between the law enforcement authorities in the Member States and between Member States and the relevant agencies, in particular by **optimising the use of and contributions to the Schengen Information System (SIS) and Visa Information System (VIS)** and reinforcing the role of EU entities such as Europol, Eurojust and the European Police College (Cepol).

6) Strengthening deterrents against terrorist radicalisation: Members believed that measures aimed at preventing the radicalisation of European citizens and their recruitment by terrorist organisations will not be fully effective until they are accompanied by an **effective, dissuasive and articulated range of criminal justice measures** in all Member States. Through effectively **criminalising terrorist acts carried out abroad** with terrorist organisations, Member States will equip themselves with the tools needed to eliminate terrorist radicalisation among European citizens.

Members called for reinforced capacities for **Eurojust's** Coordination Centre, which should play a critical role in promoting the joint action of Member States' judicial authorities in the collection of evidence and enhance the effectiveness of prosecutions of crimes related to terrorism. They also called for the EU to work on the setting-up of **judicial and law enforcement cooperation agreements with third countries** to facilitate the collection of evidence in said countries, provided that fundamental rights are safeguarded by all parties.

7) Preventing the departure and anticipating the return of radicalised European citizens: Parliament reiterated that the EU must **step up its external border controls** as a matter of urgency, on a basis of full compliance with fundamental rights. However, it stressed that it will be impossible to effectively track entry and exit in the EU unless Member States implement the mandatory and systematic controls at the EU's external borders.

In these circumstances, Member States should:

- make good use of existing instruments **such as the SIS, SIS II and VIS systems**, including with reference to stolen, lost and falsified passports;
- **give their border guards systematic access to the Europol information system**, which may contain information on people suspected of terrorism;
- share good practices with regard to exit and return checks and the **freezing of financial assets of citizens;**
- be able to **confiscate the passports of their citizens** planning to join terrorist organisations at the request of the competent judicial authority, according to their national laws and in full compliance with the principle of proportionality;

- ensure that **foreign fighters are put under judicial control** and, where necessary, in administrative detention upon their return to Europe, until such time as due judicial prosecution takes place.

8) Strengthening links between internal and external security in the EU: Members stressed the vital importance of the EU **establishing close cooperation with third countries, notably transit countries and destination countries**, in order to be able to identify EU citizens and non-European residents leaving to fight for terrorist organisations or returning thereafter.

The EU should increase its cooperation with regional partners in order to **curb arms trafficking,** targeting in particular the countries where terrorism originates, and to follow closely the export of armaments that could be exploited by terrorists. Members also called for **foreign policy tools and engagement with third countries to be strengthened** with a view to countering the financing of terrorist organisations.

9) Dismantling terrorist networks: Parliament underlined that money laundering, tax evasion and other fiscal crimes are in some cases major sources of terrorism funding. **Tracking and combating crimes affecting the EU's financial interests** must therefore be a priority.

Terrorist organisations such as IS/Daesh and Jabhat al-Nusra have accrued substantial financial resources in Iraq and Syria from **smuggling oil,** selling stolen goods, kidnapping and extortion, seizing bank accounts and smuggling antiquities. Members called, therefore, for the countries and the intermediaries contributing to this black market to be identified and their activities brought to a halt as a matter of urgency.

Members called for a **harmonised approach** to the definition as a criminal offence of hate speech, online and offline, whereby radicals incite others to disrespect and violate fundamental rights.

Lastly, Parliament called on the Council to create a **blacklist of European jihadists** and jihadist terrorist suspects.