Believe in People

EPP Group **Position Paper**

We Put **People's Safety First**

epp group in the european parliament

EN

EPP Group **Position Paper**

We Put **People's Safety First**

Table of Contents

Europeans need **to feel safe** 5

Combatting terrorism 7

Securing our borders 15

Creating a **secure and safe cyber space** 21

Conclusion 23

Europeans need **to feel safe**

Our world is a world of change. Old allies are distancing themselves from Europe, old rivals are threatening our continent again. New threats occur, new technologies give criminals new opportunities. In the face of these new threats, the EU provides a safe harbour of peace, stability, freedom and democracy. The EPP Group has led, and continues to lead, in providing security for our citizens. Our achievements these past five years have made our continent safer, but we can, and must do more.

Combatting terrorism

No matter what political ideology, religious belief, or separatist aspiration a terrorist has, their actions are a crime that must be eliminated. Terrorists, whether lone actors or members of a network of hate, know no frontiers; we must respond across our common borders.

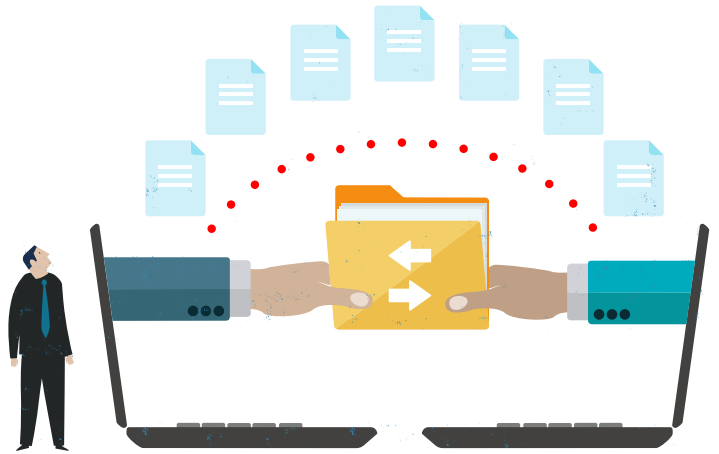
(1) Cooperation and exchange of information

> We can now provide security using the systems and instruments we have put in place since 2014, but we must do more. Our goal is to deepen the interoperability of European information systems and create a unique portal that gives law enforcement access to information from all European databases.

> We must strengthen the role of EUROPOL as an effective hub for the exchange of police information.

> We need to push for a renewal of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy to help streamline overlapping tools in the EU.

> We need to build up trust through daily cooperation and joint operations; exchanging information is key. We must feed both centralised and decentralised European information systems with enough high quality data from Member



States to identify and track down terrorists. The interoperability of these systems must be enhanced, their decentralised accessibility improved and we must ensure that information arrives at law enforcement end-users in a workable format.

> International cooperation and interaction with third countries are essential, as organised crime and terrorism can only be combatted efficiently globally.

> Biometrics (fingerprints and facial recognition) are essential to detect fake and double identities.

> We must raise awareness and preparedness against Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear (CBRN) attacks. First responders must be trained and civil emergency planning fortified. Salisbury must teach us a lesson.

(2) Disrupting the means

It is essential we:

> **Enhance cooperation** between financial intelligence units, to better detect and track illicit financial flows. We need to monitor suspicious financial flows in the SEPA system, with the aim of developing a Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP) for SEPA, following the example of the TFTP with the United States.

> Push for the **implementation of the 5th Anti-Money Laundering Directive.**

> Push for a swift agreement facilitating access for police and judicial authorities to electronic data stored or processed in real-time by online platforms, irrespective of their location. This is needed to investigate, prosecute and convict terrorists and criminals.

> Push for the confiscation of the proceeds of crime. Crime cannot pay.

> Provide better training to detect explosives materials and track suspicious transactions, in particular in online-retail; further diminish trafficking/illegal acquisition, both of explosives and firearms as well as ammunitions, through the full implementation of the EU Directive 2017/853.

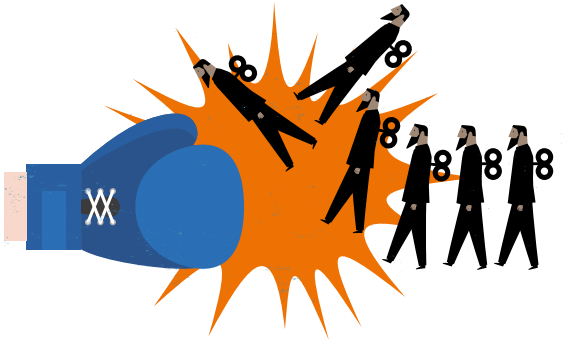
> Call for the swift implementation of the Terrorism Directive to see terrorist offences (including preparations) criminalised EU-wide so that similar crimes are similarly punished.

(3) Prevention and counter-radicalisation

> Migrants must integrate in reception countries.

> Integration does not mean assimilation, but active efforts to integrate by anyone who wants to live in the EU.

> Parallel societies in Europe must be combatted with all severity, no pardon for those who act against European values, and promote violence and extremism.



> While everyone's rights must be respected, it is also fair and reasonable to expect anyone on the Union's territory to respect the values, traditions and obligations that our Union is built upon.

> Our Union depends on the proper functioning of the rule of law. If it is allowed to be threatened anywhere, we risk it collapsing everywhere.

> In cases of non-respect for our fundamental rights, including the violation of our laws, return/repatriation is the final, but logical, consequence and must carried out in respect of international law and the principle of non-refoulement.

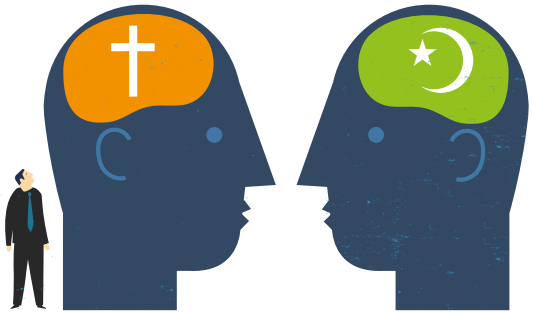
> We must **fund local strategies** for community policing, youth empowerment and education, which are key to tackling radicalisation; they have proven to be more successful than centralised approaches.

> We stress the importance of properly funded **de-radicalisation programmes in prisons**, which are hotbeds for religious extremism. We must promote the institution of moderate and independent prison imams who provide religious and spiritual services, as well as being counsellors and interlocutors for Muslim prisoners (as is the case for other faiths).

> **Online terrorist content must be countered**. Companies are accountable for what is hosted on their platforms and must swiftly remove terrorist and illegal content online.

> We need to develop an effective counter-narrative: the Internet is an opportunity to reach people, challenge their views and prevent them from being pulled towards extremism.

> We must exchange good practices with third countries on how to efficiently set up and execute anti-radicalisation strategies so as to reduce radical sentiment.



(4) Victims of terrorism

> We are committed to fighting for victims' rights to justice, dignity and remembrance. We call for a "**Victims of Terrorism Regulation**" that ensures automatic access to care and financial support for all victims and sets minimum standards for fast and effective help, because those victims were targeted for the values we all represent.

> We want to create a single access point for information and advice for victims, as well as psychological aid and advice on the support services available. This needs to be coordinated at a future European victim support centre.

> We call on the Member States to set up legal mechanisms to criminalise the glorification of a specific act of terrorism in the event that it humiliates the victims and causes secondary victimisation by damaging the victims' dignity and recovery.

> We should engage with the media to adopt auto-regulation measures in the aftermath of an attack in order to **guarantee the protection of the private life** of victims and their families.

Securing our borders

We have to enhance control of our external borders. We are convinced that better protection of the EU's external borders is crucial to preserve our citizens' security, manage the migration crisis and maintain the passport-free Schengen zone. The EU's external borders are common borders, requiring collective and joint action by national and EU authorities. We need to harmonise our procedures. Our border control forces have to ensure that we know who enters and leaves the EU, and that persons in need of international protection are given effective access to asylum procedures, while those who do not qualify are returned. Efficient control of our external borders is fundamental, but the whole chain has to work. Detecting those who cross our external border illegally is not enough, the return system has to work just as well.

(1) Integrated border management

> We will insist on the full implementation of approved border management measures. Member States are not complying with current rules, which makes the system imperfect. We must work together to address this.

> Upgrading the European Border and Coast Guard by stepping up the operational capacity of the agency, with an increased standing corps of 10,000 European border guards with its own equipment, is key.

> We must provide financial support and training for an increased number of national border guards in Member States, at our external borders, to sustain ongoing operations.

> We need to **reinforce border check procedures** by optimising and interconnecting new EU IT systems and implementing a **common identity repository**, with a shared biometric matching system and facial recognition technologies to ensure comprehensive checks on all persons entering via the EU's external borders.

> A shared access mechanism to unlock the information available in various systems for border checks must be created. We need to know who crosses our borders.

> Operational interoperability between the services controlling our external border and law enforcement agencies within the Schengen area must be secured, to counter unauthorised secondary movements, illegal immigration and crime across the external border.

> Schengen must remain an area of free movement because this means more security at our external borders, not less. But Schengen depends on Member States meeting their obligations at those borders, so that we can restore people's confidence in our shared space.

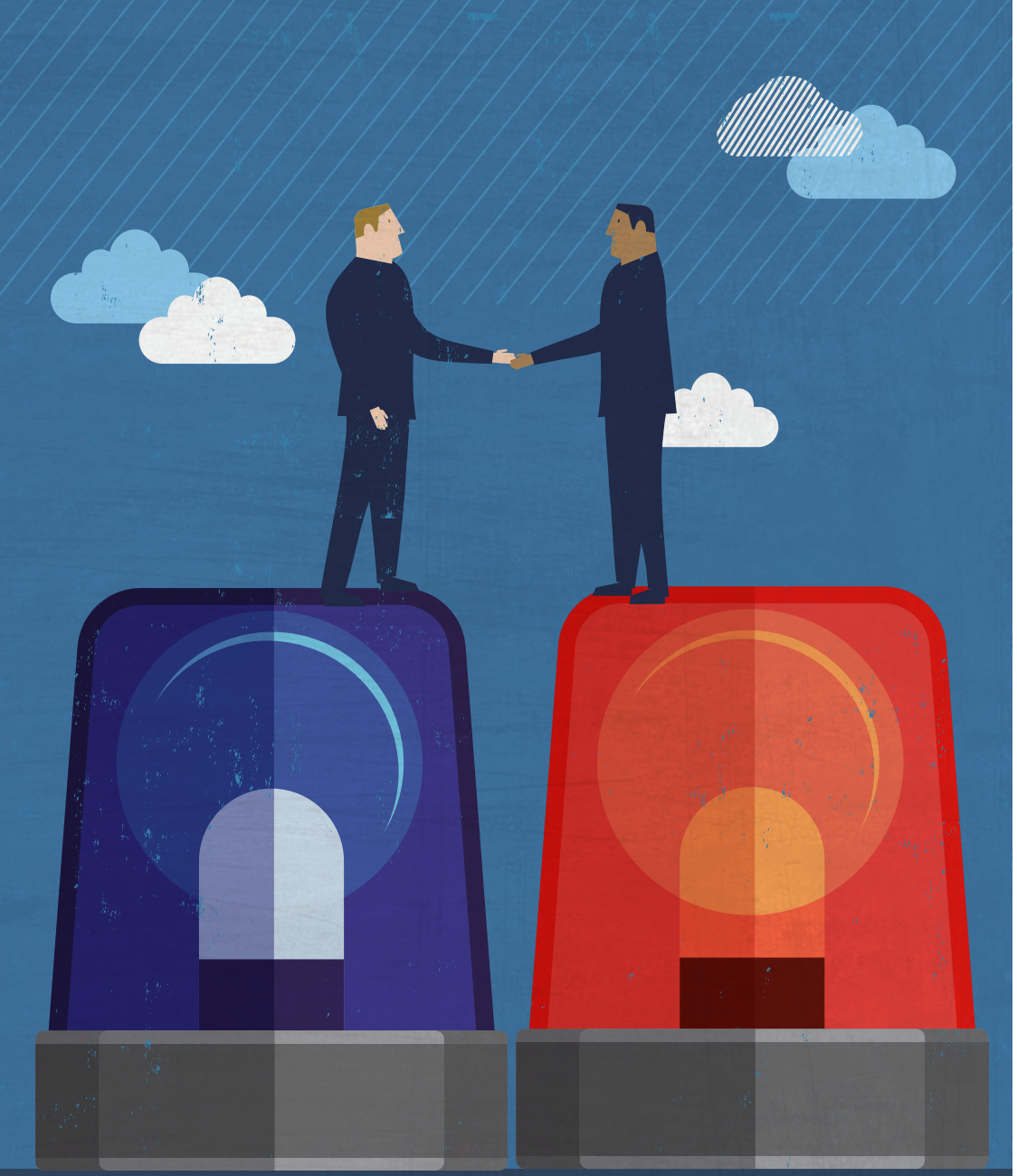
> Member States must be ready to intensify police checks for illegal immigration and combat cross-border crimes with targeted controls.

> We need a European Return warrant. A third-country national subject to a return decision should be effectively returned. We should harmonise the administrative, technical and operational capacities of Member States to implement return decisions as an integral part of the chain of migration management. It should be possible for one Member State's decision to be implemented by another Member State.

(1a) Reception centres in third countries

> Well-equipped reception centres, as far as humanitarian needs are concerned, should be set up or expanded in transit countries and safe third countries. Refugees as well as illegal migrants have to stay there until the decision on their asylum status has been clarified. In the case of a negative decision, they are to be returned. The reception centres must be under EU leadership, with guards and supervisors trained by EU experts.

> We must explore the concept of EU-led and funded disembarkation locations in safe areas outside the EU's territory where, with all humanitarian considerations taken into account, anyone rescued at sea would be brought immediately. Their asylum request would be processed there by EU experts, based on EU standards. In the event of a negative decision they would be returned to their country of origin in line with international safeguards. If a positive decision was made, they would be resettled.



(2) Strengthened police cooperation

> Closer **cooperation between EUROPOL, CEPOL** and the **EBCG (European Border and Coast Guard) Agency**, when assessing the overall picture on serious and organised crime and terrorism in Europe, is needed.

> Cross-border police cooperation is key to remedying threats to internal security. Language training, common procedures and joint patrols among police forces stationed on the internal borders of the EU must be encouraged.

(3) Cooperation with third countries

The borders of the European Union are no longer along the shores of the Mediterranean but at the edge of the Sahara desert. Securing our borders in the South starts with the right mix of development and military cooperation. Economic aid must be linked to a policy of returns and readmissions. We have to increase EU training and equipping efforts to increase the capabilities of our partners. In empowering local partners we already protect our citizens south of the Sahel.

> We need to establish practical cooperation in the field of border management with third countries. The area of operations should be increased to enable EBCG Agency activities at the external borders of those third countries as well.

> Upstream border checks (preclearance) must be further developed in third-country border crossing points.

> Visas for countries not cooperating on readmission must be stopped.

Creating a secure and safe cyber space

People need to feel they are protected on their streets, in their homes, but also online. The digital world has to have a free flow of goods and services, but also information. Misinformation, fake news and propaganda are a threat to our collective security because they undermine the trust citizens have in their institutions. Europe, with its industrial base, must become a leader in cybersecurity, to keep our consumer goods and industrial applications safe, to secure critical infrastructure and to keep the flow of information genuine.

(1) We believe in cybersecurity

> We must reinforce the EU Cybersecurity Agency (ENISA) with adequate funding and resources, because active collaboration is vital for effective cyber governance.

> We need to make **notifications to ENISA** a requirement for cyberattacks for both private and public entities.

> We need to give ENISA the ability to **proactively investigate** cyberattacks and coordinate joint action in Europe based on best practice, knowledge and tools to combat threats and detect security breaches.

> We support a **European ICT Security Framework** to develop common security standards, common certification and labelling.

> We promote a risk-based approach to mitigating threats with our public and private partners.

> We want to develop a common EU legal framework with harmonised solutions for a cybersecurity certification scheme, which is market-driven in nature, to investigate and prosecute cybercrime (especially in the Deep and Dark Nets) and cyberattacks in all EU Member States.

> We need to upgrade the existing EUROPOL cyber unit into a real EU cyber-brigade to improve our capacity to defend ourselves.

(2) We believe in information, not misinformation

> **Online fake content must be countered**. We must create a preventive public-private partnership framework for the swift removal of fake content and the reduction of financial incentives for those who profit from disinformation by stopping advertising money going to fake news.

> We should insist on **real-name registration** to stop bots and fake accounts on social media.

> We must work with companies to create **public interest algorithms** to help with independent evaluation of posts on social media.

> We need to cooperate with journalist associations and fact-checking organisations to create an EU-wide transparent **EU fact check** platform to give citizens the tools to check for themselves.

Conclusion

In a changing world, the EU must remain a beacon of stability. Our policy should be based on the three Ps of peace, prosperity and partnership, for us and our neighbours.

To secure peace we must secure our borders; we must have the capacity to defend ourselves, both in cyberspace and with boots on the ground. We must coordinate more often, faster and better among ourselves and give ourselves the tools to do this effectively. But we must also help other countries help themselves so that they help us be safe.

If our partners do not share in our prosperity, and in our peace, we will not have long-term security. The problems of our neighbours become our problems; we must think of how to invest early, how to develop sustainably and how to permanently stabilise our neighbourhood, in order to achieve lasting security.

October 2018

epp group in the european parliament

Follow us

Published by:	EPP Group in the European Parliament Directorate for Press and Communications Publications Unit
Editor:	Pedro López de Pablo
Responsible:	Pete Pakarinen
Coordinator:	Daniela Bührig
Revision:	Mark Dunne
Address:	European Parliament, 60 Rue Wiertz, B-1047 - Brussels
Internet:	www.eppgroup.eu
E-mail:	epp-publications@ep.europa.eu

Copyright: EPP Group in the European Parliament

#AmbitiousEUROPE