



Head Office
10 Rue de Commerce
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Tel: +32 456 71 91 16
Email: yepp@epp.eu

Strengthening Europe's Response to Terrorism

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Dublin on 25/04/2026

*Presented by: **Kristdemokratiska Ungdomsförbundet (KDU, Sweden), Slovenska demokratska mladina (SDM, Slovenia), and Forza Italia Giovani (FIG, Italy)***

*Supported by: **Organossi Neon Neas Demokratias (ONNED, Greece), Top Tym (Czech Republic), Youth of Democratic Rally (NEDISY), Youth of the Croatian Democratic Union (MHDZ, Croatia), Youth Forces Union of VMRO-DPMNE (North Macedonia), Christian Democratic Youth of Slovakia (KDMS, Slovakia), Mladež Hrvatske demokratske zajednice Bosne i Hercegovine (MHDZ BiH, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Kristillisdemokraattiset Nuoret (KDN, Finland), Moderata Ungdomsförbundet (MUF, Sweden), PAS Youth (Moldova), Unge Høyre (UHL, Norway) and Konservativ Ungdom (KU, Denmark).***

Preamble

Europe faces a serious and evolving Islamist threat. Such ideologies challenge the fundamental European principles and values. Recent years have demonstrated that extremist networks retain both the intent and the capability to carry out attacks within the EU, often exploiting open societies and cross-border vulnerabilities. Islamist terrorism remains a central component of this threat landscape as consistently identified in EU security assessments. In 2024 alone, EU Member States reported 24 jihadist terrorist attacks (which represents an increase from 14 in 2023) with jihadist terrorism accounting for the majority of fatalities and injuries.¹ At the same time Islamist organisations increasingly operate through transnational structures that combine armed activity, ideological influence and financial networks. Existing legal frameworks at the European level already provide some of the tools needed to address these threats, yet inconsistencies in their application risk lessen their effectiveness. These inconsistencies are particularly evident in the treatment of organisations where distinctions within organisational structures may not reflect operational realities. The evolving nature of Islamism in Europe which is characterised by online radicalisation, decentralised recruitment and complex financing methods requires a coordinated and legally robust response across the member states. Islamist extremism has also fostered parallel societies and no-go zones across multiple Member States, where Shari'a norms increasingly supplant national law and state authority is diminished.²

Recognising that

- Europol has identified Jihadist terrorism as a major terrorist threat within the EU,¹
- Islamist movements are establishing ghettoized 'no-go' zones, where systematic violations of human rights and national law occur under Shari'a law.^{2 3}
- The EU terrorist-listing regime is governed by Council Common Position 2001/931/CFSP which provides for restrictive measures including asset freezes.⁴

- The current EU framework lists only the military wing of Hezbollah, despite the organisation's unified structure being widely acknowledged.⁵
- The UN Security Council has condemned attacks carried out by the Houthi movement against international shipping in the Red Sea.⁶
- Terrorist financing may occur through both formal and informal financial channels including structures that are not always subject to sufficient oversight.⁷
- The Council of the European Union has designated the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organisation under the EU terrorist list.⁸
- In 2024, 24 jihadist terrorist attacks were recorded across 14 Member States, the highest number in recent years and predominantly carried out by lone actors, confirming jihadist terrorism as the most lethal form of terrorism in the EU.¹
- Data from the Jihadi Plots in Europe Dataset (JPED) demonstrate that 58.2% of jihadi plots since 1994 are foiled, yet the persistence of complex, multi-perpetrator plots reveals that the underlying threat remains substantial and underreported when measured by completed attacks alone.⁹
- Islamist extremism has led to the development of parallel societies and no-go zones in multiple Member States, with recent estimates placing the total between 900 and 1,000 such areas across several key EU countries (France, Sweden, Italy and Spain), characterised by organised crime, informal economies and organized opposition to state authority.²
- Between 2020 and May 2025, Germany recorded nine executed Islamist terrorist attacks and twenty publicly reported thwarted plots, illustrating the continued evolution and intensity of the threat. The European People's Party (EPP) has long called for vigorous action against Islamist extremism to preserve cohesive societies and counter parallel societies fuelled by Salafist and Wahhabist ideologies.¹¹
- The EPP has consistently highlighted the threat to stability and human rights posed by Middle East Islamist militant groups, including¹⁰ ISIS/ISIL, and the need for comprehensive international responses.¹²

Acknowledging that

- Counter-terrorism measures must comply with the rule of law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU.¹³
- Differences in national legislation and enforcement create vulnerabilities that can be exploited by terrorist networks.
- Effective counter-terrorism requires both legal harmonisation and strengthened cooperation between the Member States.
- European leaders in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom have publicly acknowledged the failure of multiculturalism policies, which have enabled the emergence of separate Islamist societies within Europe.¹⁴
- As an ontological standpoint, Islamism and its values are opposed to European legal and moral systems, which combined with self-decided segregation in housing and labour markets continues to create fertile grounds for radical Islamist ideologies within Europe, despite the EU's commitment to integration.¹⁵
- Radicalisation patterns in Europe frequently involve second-generation immigrants and converts, with networks evolving through prisons, radical mosques, and online platforms, as documented in comprehensive studies of European jihadist movements.¹⁸

- Islamism has led to an overrepresentation of Muslims in crime statistics across several European Union countries, according to official and independent reports that document disproportionate involvement in prisons, violent crime, and specific offense categories:
 - In France, Muslims comprise only 8.5% of the 18- to 24-year-old age cohort yet represent 39.9% of prisoners in that cohort.¹⁹
 - In Germany, research commissioned by the government and reported by the BBC found that migrants fueled a 10.4% rise in violent crime in Lower Saxony between 2015 and 2016.²⁰
 - In Denmark, figures from Danmarks Statistik for 2021 that within 5,921 total violent crime convictions, despite making up only 14% of the population (817,438 out of 5,840,045), they accounted for 29% of convictions, yielding a rate 2.5 times higher than natives, with the highest rates being seven to nine times the Danish average.²¹
 - These empirical patterns are further illustrated in related cases, such as the UK's group-based child sexual exploitation scandals involving a disproportionate number of Pakistani- and/or Muslim-heritage perpetrators.²²

YEPP condemns

- All forms of terrorism and violent extremism.
- Islamist organisations that combine terrorist activity with political or organisational structures in ways that obscure their operational nature.
- The use of proxy actors by foreign states to support or enable terrorist activity.
- That Islamist terrorism is singularly interested and effective in weakening women's rights, and that the presence of Islamist terrorism leads to a lower legal status of women wherever it is active.¹⁷

YEPP calls on:

1. The Council of the European Union
 - To designate Hezbollah in its entirety as a terrorist organisation, thereby eliminating the artificial distinction between its political and military wings;
 - To assess the designation of the Houthi movement (Ansar Allah) as a terrorist organisation in view of its repeated attacks on international shipping;
 - To ensure the uniform and consistent application of the EU terrorist-listing framework across all Member States.
2. The European Commission and relevant EU agencies
 - To strengthen oversight mechanisms for financial flows potentially linked to Islamist terrorist activity;
 - To intensify cooperation with digital platforms in order to counter terrorist propaganda, recruitment and online radicalisation;
 - To further enhance the operational capacities of Europol and Eurojust in cross-border counter-terrorism investigations.
3. EU Member States
 - To ensure the full and timely implementation of Directive (EU) 2017/541 on combating terrorism;
 - To reinforce national legislation addressing participation in, support for, or facilitation of terrorist activities;
 - To enhance intelligence-sharing and judicial cooperation across borders;

- To guarantee the full and consistent enforcement of the EU designation of the IRGC and to adopt the necessary national measures against linked individuals, entities and networks.
 - To continue developing comprehensive social policies targeted at young people, particularly in the fields of affordable housing, quality employment, education and skills development, in order to improve integration and eliminate these factors as a possible fertile ground for radicalisation and Islamist terrorism among youth on EU territory.
4. The European Union in its external action
- To address the role of foreign state and non-state actors in supporting or enabling terrorist organisations through targeted external policy instruments;
 - To strengthen strategic cooperation with international partners in countering transnational terrorist threats.

Sources:

1. Europol. (2025). *European Union terrorism situation and trend report (TE-SAT 2025)*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publication-events/main-reports/european-union-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-2025-eu-te-sat>
2. Kern, S. (2026). *Mass immigration, Islamization, and no-go zones in Europe*. New Direction / IDI Center. idicenter.org/article/mass-immigration-islamization-and-no-go-zones-in-europe
3. *National Secular Society*. (2013, Feb 1st). <https://www.secularism.org.uk/uploads/newswire-01-february-2013-5.pdf?v=1408542694>
4. Council Common Position 2001/931/CFSP of 27 December 2001. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/compos/2001/931/oj/eng>
5. EU Sanctions Map (European Commission). <https://www.sanctionsmap.eu/>
6. United Nations Security Council. (2024). *Resolution 2722*. [https://docs.un.org/en/s/res/2722\(2024\)](https://docs.un.org/en/s/res/2722(2024))
7. Financial Action Task Force. (2019). *Terrorist financing risk assessment guidance*. <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf-gafi/guidance/Terrorist-Financing-Risk-Assessment-Guidance.pdf>
8. Council of the European Union. (2026, February 19). *EU terrorist list: Council designates the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organisation*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2026/02/19/eu-terrorist-list-council-designates-the-islamic-revolutionary-guard-corps-as-a-terrorist-organisation/>
9. Nesser, P. (2024). Introducing the Jihadi Plots in Europe Dataset (JPED). *Journal of Peace Research*, 61(2), 317–329. <https://academic.oup.com/jpr/article/61/2/317/8364848>
10. Enslin, J. (2025). The evolution of the Islamist terror threat landscape in Germany since 2020. *CTC Sentinel*. <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-evolution-of-the-islamist-terror-threat-landscape-in-germany-since-2020/>
11. European People’s Party. (2017). *For a cohesive society: Countering Islamic extremism* [Resolution adopted at EPP Congress, Malta, 29-30 March 2017]. <https://www.epp.eu/files/uploads/2017/04/1-EPP-Resolution.pdf>
12. European People’s Party. (2014). *The threat to stability and human rights posed by Middle East Islamic militant groups* [Resolution adopted by EPP Political Assembly, 12 September 2014]. <https://www.epp.eu/files/uploads/2015/11/The-Threat-to-Stability-and-Human-Rights-Posed-by-Middle-East-Islamic-Militant-Groups.pdf>

13. Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, Article 52. <https://fra.europa.eu/en/eu-charter/article/52-scope-and-interpretation-rights-and-principles>
14. Lebl, L. S. (2014). The Islamist threat to European security. *Middle East Quarterly*, 21(3). <https://www.meforum.org/3837/the-islamist-threat-to-european-security>
15. Tausch, A. (2021). Islamist terrorism, political Islam and migration in Western Europe. In *Directions in international terrorism*, pp. 289–334. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-3380-5_13
16. Cordesman, A. H. (2017). *Islam and the patterns in terrorism and violent extremism*. Center for Strategic and International Studies. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep23296>
17. Meierrieks, D., and Renner, L. (2023). Islamist terrorism and the status of women. *European Journal of Political Economy*, 78. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2023.102364>
18. Rabasa, A., and Benard, C. (2015). *Eurojihad: Patterns of Islamist radicalization and terrorism in Europe*. Cambridge University Press. https://assets.cambridge.org/97811070/78932/frontmatter/9781107078932_frontmatter.pdf
19. Laurence, J., and Vaïsse, J. (2006). *Integrating Islam: Political and religious challenges in contemporary France*. Brookings Institution Press. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/integratingislam_chapter.pdf
20. BBC News. (2018, January 3). *Germany: Migrants 'may have fuelled violent crime rise'*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42557828>
21. Statistics Denmark. (n.d.). Convicted persons [Dataset]. Retrieved April 6th, 2026, from <https://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/emner/sociale-forhold/kriminalitet/doemte-personer> (Note: The 2021 violent crime conviction figures by ancestry/origin, namely 5,921 total convictions are drawn directly from official Statistics Denmark data on convicted persons by national origin, as referenced in independent analyses of the dataset). More data can be found on <https://www.statbank.dk/20338> under various tabs for many more years.
22. Casey, L. (2025). *National audit on group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse*. UK Government. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-audit-on-group-based-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/national-audit-on-group-based-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-accessible>