The EU Ineffective Counterterrorism Strategy

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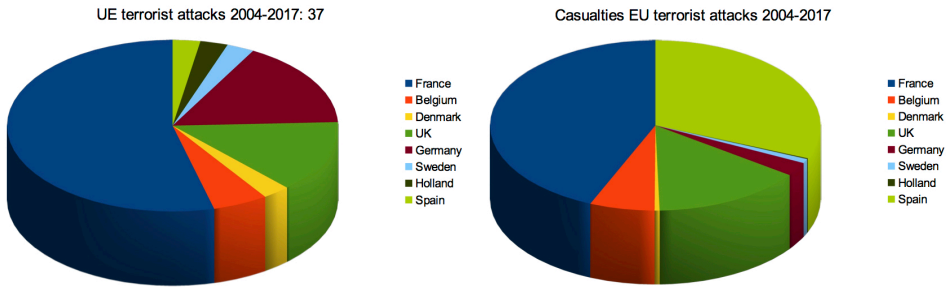
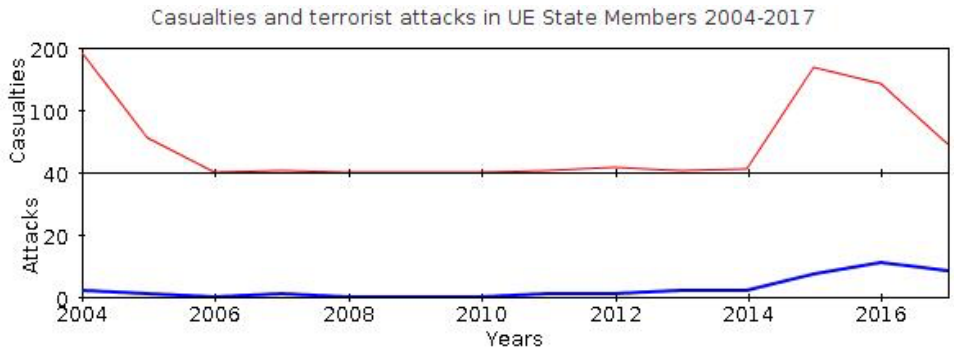
Introduction

The European Union security and counter-terrorism strategy adopted after 11 September 2001 has not been effective, instead resulted in the increase of Islamist terrorist incidents.

Europe has been hit by a wave of terrorist attacks, which demonstrates the limits of the Security and Defence Policy. The EU short-term strategy, tending only to hit terrorist organisations, has not produced the expected effects: attacks in Europe, rather than decreasing, have increased. Little or nothing has been done to develop a successful preventive strategy.

After the early 2000s, there is hardly registered Islamic attack within the EU, due to the change in the Al-Qaeda strategy. The recrudescence recorded after 2014 coincides with the rise of ISIS.



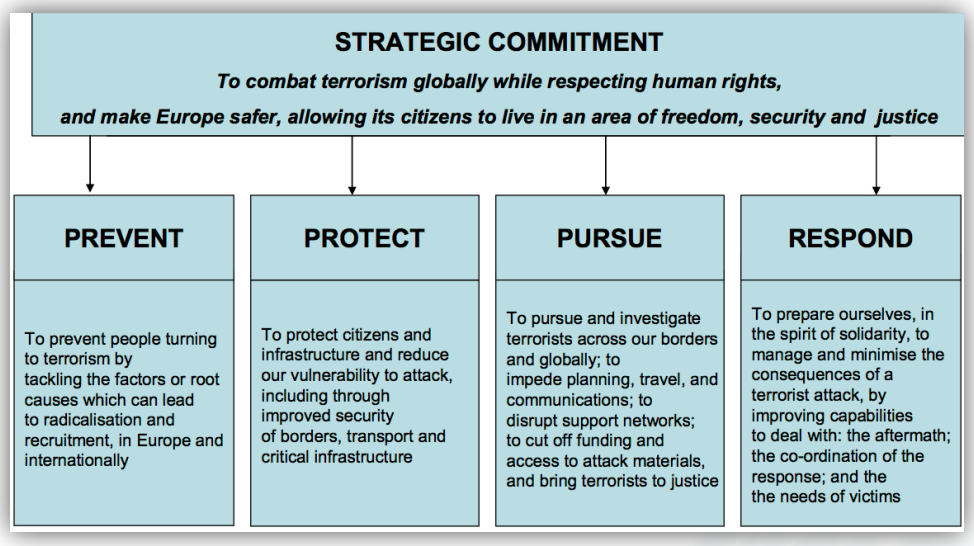


Data updated by 20 June 2017

The EU Counterterrorism Strategy

The introduction of the *European Security Strategy* adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the European Council in Brussels on 12 December 2003 upon proposal of then EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, states that "Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free. The violence of the first half of the 20th Century has given way to a period of peace and stability unprecedented in European history".[1] No statement was more wrong.

The *European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy* (2005) is based on four pillars: prevent, protect, pursue, and respond (PPPR).[2]



EU Member States addressed radicalisation by adopting criminal provisions and administrative tools of preventive or punitive nature, such as the detection of suspicious travel.[3]

Repressive measures are no longer sufficient to prevent the radicalisation of EU citizens.[4]

Need for designing prevention strategies that encompass the fields of education, social integration, the fight against discrimination, and intercultural and interreligious dialogue, recommends closer collaboration with organisations for cultural dialogue, and stress the importance of working with representatives of civil society.[5]

Methodological Note

Research considers only religiously motivated attacks, inspired by the ideology of Islamist terrorist groups, or coordinated by these. Charts do not include attacks that were merely at a talking stage and were not actually in operation, and plots that were foiled at an early stage before any materials were actually assembled. Multiple coordinate attacks (e.g. Toulouse and Montauban shootings of 11-12 March 2012; 7 July 2005 London bombings; Île-de-France attacks of 7-9 January 2015), are considered a unique incident. Death toll includes perpetrators.

Conclusion

The EU shortsighted strategy adopted so far to combat Islamic terrorism has proved ineffective. Attacks within the EU, rather than decreasing, have increased. The high number of terrorist incidents and casualties within the EU demonstrates that terrorism can not be stopped only with criminal provisions, freezing of assets and financial resources, blocking immigration and strengthening of border controls. Only a long-term cultural strategy, adequately funded, can be effective to counter terrorism.

References

[1] Javier Solana (2003), *European Security Strategy. A Secure Europe in a Better World*, 3.
[2] Presidency and CT Co-ordinator (2005), *The European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy* (14469/4/05 REV 4), 3.
[3] Piotr Bąkowski & Laura Puccio (2015), *'Foreign fighters' Member States' responses and EU action in an international context* (PE 548.980), 1,6-8.
[4] Rachida Dati (2015), *Report on the prevention of radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations* (2015/2063(INI)), 22.
[5] Charles Tannock, *Opinion of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs on the prevention of radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations* (2015/2063(INI)), 25.

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