



## Security Union: Rules on removing terrorist content online become applicable

Brussels, 7 June 2022

Today the EU Regulation on addressing the dissemination of terrorist content online enters into application. The Regulation provides a legal framework to ensure that hosting service providers will take down terrorist content online within one hour.

Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis **Schinias**, said: *"The last years have been marked by horrific terrorist attacks on European soil. Images from the attacks in Paris, Halle, or Christchurch are stark reminders that fighting terrorism has to take place both on and off-line. Terrorist content is most harmful in the first hours after its appearance. Taking down terrorist content immediately is crucial to stop terrorists from exploiting the Internet to recruit, encourage attacks, provide training and to glorify their crimes. Today Europe's Security Union becomes a tangible reality."*

Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva **Johansson**, said: *"With the recent mass shooting at a supermarket in Buffalo, US, which was livestreamed online, it is clear that our work on removing terrorist content online is crucial. Such horrifying videos motivate other perpetrators to follow the same footsteps and create violent videos. We have the tools at our disposal to make sure such content is quickly removed from online platforms and I am happy to announce that the rules on removing terrorist content online are applicable as from today."*

The obligations and safeguards included in this regulation will curb the ability of terrorists to spread their propaganda online. For instance, the livestreamed terrorist attack in Christchurch in 2019 has served as direct inspiration and motivation for a number of copycat attacks, the latest one in Buffalo, USA, last month.

At the same time, the application of these new rules will strengthen accountability and transparency about measures taken to remove terrorist content online. They also provide for a number of strong safeguards against erroneous removals of legitimate speech online. It is equally crucial to protect victims and their families, who risk being confronted with these crimes again online.

### Main elements of the new rules

As of today, the following rules apply:

- **One-hour rule:** Online platforms will be obliged to remove terrorist content upon receiving a removal order from Member States' authorities within one hour.
- It will also make it **compulsory for platforms to take measures** when they are exposed to terrorist content.
- Removal orders must contain **justifications** as to why material is considered to be terrorist content, including detailed information on how to challenge the removal order.
- The rules include strong safeguards to ensure the full **respect of fundamental rights**, such as freedom of expression and right to information. For example, material disseminated for educational, journalistic, artistic or research purposes is exempted.
- Member States will be able to sanction non-compliance and to decide on the level of penalties, which will be proportionate to the nature of the infringement.
- The new rules also set **transparency obligations** for online platforms and for national authorities to report annually on the amount of terrorist content removed, the outcomes of complaints and appeals, as well as the number and type of penalties imposed on online platforms.

### Background

Fighting terrorism online and offline is a priority for the von der Leyen Commission. In July 2020, the Commission presented the EU Security Union Strategy 2020-2025 and committed to focus on priority

areas where the EU can bring value to support Member States in fostering security for those living in Europe. The following December 2020, the Counter-Terrorism Agenda was adopted, putting emphasis on prevention of radicalisation online and offline and included the adoption of the present Regulation as one of its key actions.

The Commission proposed the Regulation on preventing the dissemination of terrorist content online in 2018, given the continued presence of terrorist content on the web. It was proposed to avoid this grave risk for citizens and for society at large.

Since the Regulation entered into force on 7 June 2021, the Commission has been holding workshops for Member States and hosting service providers (HSPs) to prepare for the application of the Regulation. Europol has also developed an EU Platform on addressing illegal content online (PERCI) to support the implementation of the Regulation. This way, they ensure that HSPs can receive removal orders from Member States through a common secure channel.

### **For More Information**

[Legislative Proposal](#)

[DG HOME: Terrorist Content Online](#)

[Terrorist Content Online Factsheet](#)

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