

Fighting Terrorism Online: Public-private sector cooperation as important as ever at the fourth EU Internet Forum

Today, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos and Commissioner for the Security Union Julian King will host the 4th ministerial meeting of the EU Internet Forum. It will be an opportunity for representatives of companies, including Baaz, Dropbox, Facebook, Google, Justpaste.it, Microsoft, Snap and Twitter to debrief EU Institutions, Ministers from EU Member States, and Europol on the work done over the last year and discuss next steps. Ahead of the meeting, Commissioners Avramopoulos and King issued the following joint statement.

“Since the launch of the EU Internet Forum in 2015, we have made progress in tackling terrorist content online. We have enhanced our understanding of how terrorists misuse internet platforms and put the necessary mechanisms in place to address it. Of course, more needs to be done by more companies, which is why the EU is currently in the process of adopting legislation to step up our collective efforts against online terrorist content. Nevertheless, the trust established within the Forum will have a critical role in implementing the Regulation, once it is agreed, and the Forum will continue to be on the frontline of EU efforts against terrorist content online.

Building on the voluntary cooperation established in the Forum and through the work with Europol, over 77,000 pieces of content have been referred to internet platforms, 84% of which has been removed so far. The Database of Hashes which companies developed within the EU Internet Forum now contains nearly 100,000 hashes and helps ensure that terrorist content is not re-uploaded once it has been identified.

In addition, civil society organisations seeking to drown out the terrorist narratives by providing positive alternatives are also being supported with EU funding through the Civil Society Empowerment programme, which has earmarked €12 million in training and funding civil society partners to mount counter-terrorist narrative campaigns online.”

Background

The EU Internet Forum was launched in [December 2015](#) by Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos to address the misuse of the internet by terrorist groups. The EU Internet Forum brings together EU Home Affairs Ministers, the internet industry and other stakeholders to work together in a voluntary partnership to address this complex issue and to protect EU citizens. The Forum has two key objectives: to reduce availability of and accessibility to terrorist content online, and

to empower civil society partners to increase the volume of effective alternative narratives online.

In [December 2016](#), at the EU Internet Forum, internet companies announced the creation of a shared 'Database of Hashes' to better detect potential terrorist content on social media and prevent its reappearance on other platforms. At the same meeting, the EU Civil Society Empowerment Programme was launched to develop effective alternative and counter narrative campaigns, with now nearly €12 million of EU funding to further support the development of those campaigns.

In June 2017, the [European Council](#) further called on the industry to develop new technology and tools to improve the automatic detection and removal of content that incites terrorist acts, to be complemented by the relevant legislative measures at EU level, if necessary.

During his State of the Union Address in September 2018, President Juncker responded to the European Council's call by [proposing new rules to get terrorist content off the web](#) within one hour across the EU. The proposed Regulation will provide a legal framework with clear rules and responsibilities for all relevant actors to ensure an effective response in reducing terrorist content online. A series of safeguards underpin the proposal to ensure that fundamental rights remain fully protected.

For more information

[Press Release](#) – Fighting Terrorism Online: Internet Forum pushes for automatic detection of terrorist propaganda

[Press Release](#) – State of the Union 2018: Commission proposes new rules to get terrorist

content off the web

[Factsheet](#) – A Europe That Protects: Countering terrorist content online