

The hybrid dimension of contemporary terrorism and critical infrastructure. Analysis of Europol's TE-SAT reports from 2021–2024

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Abstract

On the basis of Europol TE-SAT reports from 2021-2024, the author analyses contemporary manifestations of terrorism in the European Union, paying particular attention to its hybrid nature and its impact on the security of critical infrastructure (CI). The starting point of the considerations is the characterisation of the new – according to David Rapoport's typology – fifth wave of terrorism. It is characterised by, among other things, combining traditional and modern methods of operation, links between terrorists and organised crime and the special services of hostile states, as well as activity in the digital space. Analysis of TE-SAT reports reveals the changing dynamics of attacks and arrests in the EU, the different ideological motivations of the perpetrators (jihadist, separatist, right-wing, left-anarchist) and the rise of so-called “lone wolves”. The author points to the growing role of countries such as Russia, Belarus and Iran in the use of proxy and cyber terrorist instrumentation and emphasises the need to redefine the EU's counter-terrorism policy, extend Europol's mandate (including state terrorism), intensify cooperation with NATO and develop the EU's multidimensional defence capabilities, including enhanced protection of European CI.

Keywords

terrorism, Europol, hybrid threats, critical infrastructure

A new wave of terrorist threat

Terrorism¹ is not only still present in the world, but is escalating again in different parts of the world, such as the Middle East, Africa and the European Union². The world is facing both its intensification and its evolution – so significant that it is justified to consider the hypothesis of a new wave of terrorism. According to the typology proposed by David Rapoport,³ this will be the fifth wave of the terrorist threat, after its earlier forms: anarchist, anti-colonial, leftist and religious era of jihad⁴. To a greater or lesser extent, it corresponds or even intertwines with its predecessors, for example in the context of the existence of jihadist ideology. It combines old and new aspects of tactics or strategy and has an exceptionally strong hybrid character. Hence its name – a hybrid wave of terrorism. Its main features are, among others:

1. The increasing use by terrorists of simple and easily accessible tools, including a knife or a car, on the one hand, and modern technologies on the other, e.g. drones or artificial intelligence (hybrid means), especially at the stage of planning an attack. This is accompanied by relatively easy access to firearms, massively smuggled from conflict-generating areas – in Africa, the Middle East or Europe (the case of the Balkans or Ukraine), and to weapons produced, including in 3D technology.

¹ On defining the concept of terrorism, see e.g.: A. Richards, *Defining terrorism*, in: *Routledge Handbook of Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, A. Silke (ed.), New York 2019; S. Wojciechowski, *The Hybridity of Terrorism: Understanding Contemporary Terrorism*, Berlin 2013.

² On the current escalation of terrorism see in more detail: R. Gunaratna, *Global Terrorism Threat Forecast 2025*, “RSIS Commentary” 2025, no. 002, <https://dr.ntu.edu.sg/bitstream/10356/182595/2/CO25002.pdf> [accessed: 9.03.2025]; *Security Council debates growing terrorism threat in Africa*, United Nations, 21.01.2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/01/1159246> [accessed: 5.03.2025]; Europol, *TE-SAT. European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2024*, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publication-events/main-reports/european-union-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-2024-eu-te-sat> [accessed: 4.02.2025]; Institute for Economics & Peace, *Global Terrorism Index 2025*, <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Global-Terrorism-Index-2025.pdf> [accessed: 10.03.2025].

³ D. Rapoport, *Waves of Global Terrorism: From 1879 to the Present*, Columbia University Press 2022.

⁴ The concept of waves of terrorism provokes polemics. See e.g.: T. Parker, N. Sitter, *The Four Horsemen of Terrorism: It's Not Waves, It's Strains*, “Terrorism and Political Violence” 2016, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 197–216. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2015.1112277>; D. Rapoport, *It Is Waves, Not Strains*, “Terrorism and Political Violence” 2016, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 217–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2015.1112278>.

2. The formation of increasingly stronger connections in the triad: terrorist/terrorists – criminal groups – special services of hostile countries. This is another hybrid element, particularly dangerous in the case of state terrorism, when a state entity supports or uses this type of activity (from kinetic activities to operations conducted in cyberspace), combined, among others, with criminal terror, as exemplified by the actions of Russia, Belarus, Iran and North Korea (hybrid perpetrators).
3. Terrorists are increasingly effective in promoting their narrative online. The internet and other modern technologies, such as artificial intelligence, have become an important tool used for propaganda, recruitment, disinformation, or to raise funds and organise logistics facilities. They also serve to radicalise attitudes and promote hate speech (hybrid targets), which leads to an environment conducive to the growth of extremism in the targeted countries. The age of the perpetrators – called the generation of Tik-Tok terrorists – is getting lower and lower. For example, in August 2024, police arrested two teenagers, aged 19 and 17, who were planning attacks during Taylor Swift concert in Vienna. On the other hand, during Christmas in 2024, German police detained a 15-year-old terrorist who was planning an attack on a church in Berlin.
4. The combination of the above elements results in the emergence of new threats and modification of the existing ones, including threats to facilities that meet the criteria of national or European critical infrastructure (CI). These targets can be attacked both physically and with the use of cyberspace and in all domains: land, air, sea, cyber, space and cognitive⁵ (hybrid areas of operation). This is confirmed, among others by cases of destruction or disruption of underwater CI or communication infrastructure, as well as their land, air and even space counterparts.

The aim of the article is to analyse the terrorist threat in the EU in 2020–2023 based on Europol's annual reports entitled *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report*. It covers several important categories, such as: attacks carried out, failed and foiled, the number of people arrested for

⁵ Quoted after: *Multi-Domain Operations in NATO – Explained*, NATO, 5.10.2023, <https://www.act.nato.int/article/mdo-in-nato-explained/> [accessed: 2.03.2025].

terrorist activities, court proceedings concerning arrests for committing terrorist offences in EU Member States, and forms of terrorism: jihadist, right-wing, left-wing and anarchist, ethno-nationalist and separatist. The most important point of reference is the analysis of terrorist threats concerning objects that can be classified as CI. A major limitation of the study is the scope of Europol's mandate. Against state-sponsored terrorism, it can only be engaged indirectly⁶. A direct diplomatic or military response to state terrorism falls under the jurisdiction of the EU or NATO foreign policy institution, not Europol. This also translates into its information activity and the data it collects, which are presented in the annual report. It is worth noting that some EU countries are currently taking the initiative to extend Europol's mandate to include issues of terrorism originating from state actors.

Terrorism in the European Union in 2020

Despite global restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, there was no significant decrease in terrorist activity in the EU in 2020. According to the TE-SAT 2021 report⁷, the threat level in 2020 was comparable to that in 2019, and there was even a slight increase in the number of attacks and attempts to carry them out. In the EU (excluding the UK), there were 57 terrorist attacks (this number also includes foiled attacks), 2 more than in 2019.

In 2020, Italy had the highest number of terrorist attacks (24 cases), followed by France (15) and Spain (9). Further places were taken by Germany (6), Belgium (2) and Austria (1). Including data from the UK, the total number of attacks in Europe was 119. These data confirm that

⁶ The threat of terrorism has not only an internal dimension, but also a geopolitical one, because in the background there are state actors who can support or use terrorists for their own purposes. There is state terrorism on the territory of the EU, for example, Iran has been sponsoring armed groups (such as Hezbollah) for years and has been carrying out attacks on political opponents abroad. Russia, in turn, pursues an aggressive hybrid policy towards Western countries, for example, it supports extreme extremist movements in Europe through propaganda and finance, and its special services carry out terrorist activities (for example, they order the murder of dissidents in the EU).

⁷ Europol, *TE-SAT. European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2021*, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publication-events/main-reports/european-union-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-2021-te-sat> [accessed: 4.02.2025].

even during the period of general sanitary restrictions and these related to the possibility of movement, terrorist activity has not been stopped.

In the analysed period, 4 main ideological sources of extremist activities were identified. The attacks were based on the following themes: left-wing and anarchist (25 attacks), jihadist (14), separatist and ethno-nationalist (14) and right-wing (4). The continuing high number of left-wing and anarchist attacks confirms that this is a phenomenon with a relatively stable level of activity for several years.

Although the number of attacks inspired by jihadist ideology decreased in 2020 (from 18 in 2019 to 14 in 2020), according to Europol, they can still be considered the most dangerous. Their implementation was usually successful, which proves the increasing effectiveness of the perpetrators and increases the risk to the civilian population. The escalating potential of this threat has increased due to geopolitical events, including the withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan and the rapid takeover of power by the Taliban. This success has been used by extremist circles to support the narrative of the durability and effectiveness of Islamist resistance. This could also have had an impact on the intensification of radical sentiments in extremist circles in Europe.

From the perspective of anti-terrorist activities, a noticeable decrease in the number of arrests of people suspected of links to terrorist activities was an important phenomenon – from over 700 cases in 2019 to less than 450 in 2020. However, it is debatable whether the lower number of arrests indicates less terrorist activity or perhaps the difficult work of the services in the conditions of the pandemic. Among the detainees, those suspected of links with jihadist terrorism dominated (57%), followed by people associated with left-wing and anarchist terrorism (12%), separatist terrorism (8%) and right-wing terrorism (7%). The characteristics of the perpetrators' methods of action reveal that the attacks were most often carried out by individuals acting independently, the so-called lone wolves, using easily available means, such as melee weapons or firearms.

The growing role of cyberspace as an area of operation for terrorists should be emphasised. The pandemic has increased online traffic, which extremists have used to spread ideology, recruit and consolidate their supporters. The report points out that terrorist messages increasingly included socially current themes, such as the pandemic, the ecological crisis or threats related to new technologies. The authors of this content tried to gain publicity and interest of new audiences in this way. The increase

in the importance of cyberspace may have several reasons, ranging from pandemic restrictions and difficulties, to the weakening of the logistical capabilities of terrorists, to instructions given, for example, by ISIS, to carry out attacks using the simplest means. It should be noted that due to difficult access to popular messengers, terrorists are constantly looking for new forms of communication. This applies not only to Islamists, but also to other strands of the terrorist threat.

Terrorism in the European Union in 2021

The TE-SAT 2022 report⁸ indicated that compared to previous years, 2021 brought a marked weakening of terrorist activity in Europe. Both the number of attacks – from over 50 in 2019 to 15 in 2021 – and the number of arrests have decreased significantly. The highest number of incidents was recorded in France – 5. There were 3 attacks in Germany, 2 in Sweden. Austria, Denmark, Hungary, Belgium and Spain reported 1 attack each.

Although the number of attacks linked to jihadist ideology was again lower than in previous years, this type of threat is still considered the most dangerous according to Europol. In 2021, of the 11 incidents of this type 3 were successful and 8 were successfully thwarted. The number of attempted right-wing attacks remained unchanged (3 cases), while the activity of extremist left-wing and anarchist movements almost completely decreased – only 1 case. It is worth noting the almost complete disappearance of separatist and ethno-nationalist terrorism, which was still a significant part of this phenomenon in 2020. This change may be partly due to the evolution of the classification criteria used by some Member States, as a result of which certain extremist activities are no longer classified as terrorism.

The dominant group of detainees in 2021 were people suspected of being linked to jihadism – 260 arrests, mainly in France, Spain and Austria. The second largest category were representatives of extreme right-wing currents (64 people). Smaller groups of those arrested were people associated with separatist and ethno-nationalist movements (26) and left-wing and anarchist terrorism (19).

⁸ Europol, *TE-SAT. European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2022*, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publication-events/main-reports/european-union-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-2022-te-sat> [accessed: 4.02.2025].

The authors of the report point out that the COVID-19 pandemic may have contributed significantly to the decline in physical terrorist activity, as it limited the mobility, communication and organisational capabilities of extremist groups. It also had an impact on changing the way terrorist organisations operate. On the other hand, activities carried out in the digital space – including in the field of recruitment, radicalisation, propaganda and fundraising – have intensified. This requires the security services to develop countermeasures adapted to the new conditions. However, the decline in physical terrorist activity should not be interpreted as a permanent disappearance of the threat. The increase in the number of attacks around the world, the reconstruction of ISIS and Al-Qaeda structures, the development of the extreme right, as well as new forms of terrorism – such as drone attacks, activities in cyberspace or cooperation between state structures and terrorist groups – indicate the evolutionary nature of the threat.

Terrorism in the European Union in 2022

As reported in the 2023 TE-SAT report⁹, in 2022, there were 28 events classified as terrorist attacks in EU countries. This number includes successful, unsuccessful and thwarted attacks (18). This is a significant percentage increase compared to 2021, when 15 such cases were recorded. At the same time, there were significantly fewer attacks in 2022 than in previous years (especially before the COVID-19 pandemic – 55 attacks were carried out in 2019¹⁰). The highest number of incidents occurred in Italy (12), followed by France (6), Greece (4) and Belgium (3), with isolated cases reported in Germany, Spain and Slovakia.

In terms of ideology, the most active were extreme left-wing and anarchist groups (18 incidents). Jihad-motivated actions accounted for 6 cases, and far-right ideology – 4 cases. As a result of these events, 4 people were killed: 2 as a result of Islamist attacks, 2 in connection with violence motivated by right-wing extremism.

⁹ Europol, *TE-SAT. European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2023*, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publication-events/main-reports/european-union-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-2023-te-sat> [accessed: 4.02.2025].

¹⁰ Europol, *TE-SAT. European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2022...*, pp. 8–9.

In the analysed period, law enforcement authorities of EU countries detained a total of 380 people suspected of terrorist activities. The highest number of arrests was in France (93), Spain (46), Germany (30), Belgium (22), Italy and the Netherlands (21 each). The vast majority of arrests were related to jihadist terrorism (266 people). 45 arrests were made in connection with right-wing terrorism, and 19 arrests were made on the left and anarchist lines. Also apprehended were 18 people associated with separatist and ethno-nationalist terrorism, 26 people associated with other forms of terrorism, and 6 people for whom the form of terrorism was not specified.

In 2022, 427 court proceedings related to terrorist offences were completed, slightly more than in the 2 previous years (in 2020 – 422 and in 2021 – 423). The largest number of trials took place in France (110). Next in line were: Belgium (81), Germany (54), Austria (48), Spain (42), Hungary, the Netherlands (26 each) and Italy (21). The conviction rate was high, with 100% for left- and right-wing terrorism cases and 84% for cases motivated by jihadist ideology. Separatist terrorism trials ended in conviction in 68% of cases.

An analysis of the methods used by the perpetrators shows that they most often chose primitive but effective means of attack. Left-wing and anarchist extremists used primarily improvised incendiary devices and homemade explosives. Jihadists mainly used knives and physical violence (e.g. strangulation), and perpetrators associated with right-wing extremism reached for firearms. Since the actions taken did not require either advanced resources or complex logistics, this made them difficult to predict and prevent.

The digital space has invariably been an important element of terrorist activity. The Internet was used by terrorists not only to spread propaganda and ideology, but also to recruit, raise funds and plan attacks. Popular social media platforms were used for this purpose, as well as closed discussion forums, encrypted messengers and video games. The increasing decentralisation of communication channels makes it difficult for security services to operate effectively, and the risk of radicalisation is therefore increasing.

Data from 2022 indicate that terrorism remains a significant threat to EU Member States. Although the number of arrests and convictions remains stable and the activity of organisations such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda is weakening in the EU, the threat is evolving. In addition to classic forms of violence, it is becoming increasingly important to monitor the digital space, where radicalisation occurs quickly, dispersed and often difficult

to detect. Security services must constantly adapt their activities to the changing dynamics of modern terrorism, and this is also a challenge for legal systems.

Terrorism in the European Union in 2023

In 2023, a total of 120 terrorist incidents were recorded in 7 EU Member States, of which 98 ended in an attack, 9 attempts were unsuccessful, and 13 were foiled by security services. Separatist groups, responsible for 70 attacks, and left-wing and anarchist groups, which carried out 32 attacks, were the most active. There were 14 jihadist attacks. As a result 6 people were killed and 12 injured. These were the events with the highest number of victims. In addition, 2 attacks planned by right-wing extremists were foiled.

Most attacks in 2023 were directed against: CI (15 incidents), private companies (7), civilians (4) and police officers (3). Among the reported forms of attacks, the most common were: arson (20), bombings (8), destruction of property (6), attacks with knives (6) and firearms (5).

The analysis of the TE-SAT 2024¹¹ report shows that the terrorist threat in the EU has various ideological backgrounds. In addition to jihadist terrorist groups, separatist, leftist, anarchist and right-wing organisations are active. The diversity of ideological motivations translates into diverse goals and methods of action, which makes it difficult to counteract and prevent it.

Terrorists are increasingly using modern technologies, including artificial intelligence and digital tools, to plan attacks, recruitment, and propaganda. There is a noticeable increase in interest in obtaining information on the production of weapons using 3D printers, as well as instructions on the use of drones, explosives and chemical weapons. Such actions are observed in environments focused around various ideologies, which means the need for a broad approach to monitoring and countering these threats.

The TE-SAT 2024 report indicates the significant impact of geopolitical events on the dynamics of terrorist threats in the EU. For example, Hamas's attack on Israel in October 2023 and the escalation of the conflict in the Gaza Strip have increased tensions and extremist activity in Europe. Such

¹¹ Europol, *TE-SAT. European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2024...*

events can lead to increased radicalisation and mobilisation of supporters of various extremist ideologies.

Terrorist threats in the European Union. Challenges and demands

Europol reports confirm that the EU area is one of the regions most threatened by terrorism. Among the European countries with an increased level of risk, it is necessary to point out both those that have already been frequently attacked, such as France, Italy or Germany, as well as others, such as Poland, the Czech Republic or the Baltic states. The Polish case – although the 2024 Europol report did not record any attempted attack in Poland and only 1 arrest due to terrorist activity – is important, among others, due to the increased interest of international public opinion in the Polish state. It results not only from his presidency of the EU Council or commitment to support Ukraine, but also from other political and diplomatic activities of Poland.

The intensification of the terrorist threat is confirmed by Europol data. In 2021, 18 attacks were recorded on the territory of EU Member States, in 2022 – 28, and in 2023 there were as many as 120, which means a more than fourfold increase compared to the previous year. Also noteworthy is the large disproportion in 2023 between the number of attacks carried out (98) and the number of foiled (13). Over 90% of all attacks in the year under review concerned 2 countries: France and Italy. This indicates, to some extent, the geographically limited occurrence of terrorist threats. The increase in the terrorist threat is also noticed by public opinion in the EU. According to a survey conducted in 2024 in the EU and the United Kingdom by the Bertelsmann Foundation, in which 26 000 people participated, terrorism is the second – according to the respondents – the greatest threat to peace and security. This answer was given by 21% of respondents. In the first place (25% of respondents) was indicated insufficient border protection¹².

With regard to the origins of terrorism in the EU, it should be noted that Europol reports highlight the diversity of the causes of terrorism in the EU. It is not only, as it is still quite often mistakenly believed, that it has an Islamist

¹² *Survey: Border security and terrorism top threats for EU citizens*, Yahoo, 20.11.2024, <https://www.yahoo.com/news/survey-border-security-terrorism-top-092813566.html> [accessed: 4.02.2025].

background. In 2023, for example, 70 separatist and ethno-nationalist attacks were recorded, 32 leftist and anarchist attacks, and 14 jihadist attacks. A further escalation of various strands of terrorism, state terrorism (inspired, for example, by Russia or Belarus) and non-state terrorism, fueled, among others, by the special services of hostile countries, for example in response to the intensified anti-Russian policy, support for Ukraine, or armament programmes implemented in the EU, is possible. This also generates the threat of more frequent attacks (physical and in the cybersphere) on objects related to the arms industry, including those classified as CI. The resurgence of ISIS and the accompanying operational and propaganda offensive in various parts of the world are also dangerous. This is due to various factors, including the spectacular success of the Islamists in Syria.

In recent years, CI has become a target with increased levels of vulnerability. Terrorists have noticed that a strike on power grids, transport or communication can paralyse the state as effectively as an attack on people, and it is sometimes easier to carry out. The TE-SAT 2024 report indicates that in 2023, as many as 15 terrorist attacks in the EU targeted CI (the most in the history of these reports). These were mainly attacks on transmission networks, arson attacks on telecommunications masts (traffic against 5G) or attempts to disrupt rail transport. Separatists and anarchists were behind most of these acts, for example, Corsican nationalists attacked facilities related to the functioning of the French government administration, and anarchists in Italy destroyed power stations and railway lines. Although attacks on CI rarely cause fatalities, their social impact is serious – interruptions in power, transport or communication cause chaos and economic losses. These are therefore very attractive targets from the perspective of terrorists who want to strike at society as a whole. Threats to CI are closely linked to the concept of hybrid threats. A terrorist attack on a gas network or financial system can be part of a broader terrorist campaign by a hostile state or group. The year 2023 has proven that CI will be at the heart of the EU's counter-terrorism strategy in the coming years (the new EU Counter-Terrorism Agenda will be launched in the second half of 2025). Many new or modified threats to CI facilities are related to the specificity of the fifth wave of terrorism described at the beginning of the article and to the formation of the triad: terrorist/terrorists – criminal groups – special services of hostile countries. This is particularly dangerous in the case of state terrorism, as exemplified by the actions of Russia, Belarus and Iran, among others. These countries use a wide range of operational

tools, including substitutes or intermediaries, to, inter alia cover their tracks. This is pointed out, among others, by the Finnish special service SUPO (Finnish: Suojelupoliisi) in a report covering 2024¹³.

It is worth highlighting the significant increase in crime in the EU. Europol points out directly that the main threat to the internal security of EU countries is the terror of criminal gangs. In Central and Eastern Europe, this applies especially to groups from the post-Soviet area, e.g. Ukrainian or Georgian. This threat may intensify with the end of the war in Ukraine, as it happened in the former Yugoslavia. We should take into account, among others, increased smuggling of weapons, explosives and cooperation of criminal groups with terrorists or special services of hostile countries. This is evidenced, for example, by the relations of Georgian gangs with Russian, and indirectly also with the local special services.

In conclusion, it should be emphasised that the EU needs not only a new look at the problem of the terrorist threat, but even a new anti-terrorist philosophy at the strategic level, as with the competitiveness compass and the EU's economic doctrine or the shaping of the current defence policy, including the production of armaments. The need for change results not only from the reports of Europol, Mario Draghi¹⁴ and Sauli Niinistö¹⁵, but above all from the re-escalation and evolution of the terrorist threat. This also entails new challenges in protecting CI from terrorist activity, indirectly supported by state actors hostile to the EU. TE-SAT reports indicate that Europol does not have a mandate to directly counter state terrorism. Therefore, it is necessary to revise the powers of EU agencies in this area and strengthen cooperation with NATO in the area of building the resilience of CIs to terrorist attacks supported by state actors.

¹³ SUPO, *National Security Overview 2025*, <https://katsaus.supo.fi/documents/62399122/236002257/National%20Security%20Overview%202025.pdf/a4480ede-834e-6cc3-3c08-f3b762d06253/National%20Security%20Overview%202025.pdf?t=1741941168438> [accessed: 4.02.2025].

¹⁴ M. Draghi, *The future of European competitiveness*, European Commission, https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/97e481fd-2dc3-412d-be4c-f152a8232961_en?filename=The%20future%20of%20European%20competitiveness%20_%20A%20competitiveness%20strategy%20for%20Europe.pdf [accessed: 4.02.2025].

¹⁵ S. Niinistö, *Safer Together. Strengthening Europe's Civilian and Military Preparedness and Readiness*, European Commission, https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/5bb2881f-9e29-42f2-8b77-8739b19d047c_en?filename=2024_Niinisto-report_Book_VF.pdf [accessed: 4.02.2025].

A new approach to security in the EU should address not only threats from Russia and its allies, solving the problem of migrants or energy security, but also many other issues, including effective combating terrorism. Effective countering the terrorist threat requires deepening cooperation (including intelligence, logistics, legal, and political) of all EU Member States and expanded cooperation with NATO and other allies in different parts of the world. The aim is to build resilience not only externally, but also internally.

A coherent EU anti-terrorist policy may be threatened by the particular interests of individual Member States, the ongoing political crisis in some of them, the rift in transatlantic relations, the lack of financial resources, or the economic collapse predicted by various specialists. Particular consideration should be given to the scenario assuming a reduction in intelligence cooperation between the US and European partners, which could, among others, significantly reduce the effectiveness of the EU's counter-terrorism efforts.

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