



EU counter-terrorism policy needs full assessment

Plenary sessions

Post 9/11 counter-terrorism measures taken in Europe should be properly assessed with regard to their cost, effectiveness, democratic scrutiny and impact on civil liberties, says a resolution passed in plenary session on Wednesday.

The text, presented by S&D, ALDE and Greens/EFA groups, was approved with 307 votes in favour, 259 against and 54 abstentions.

“Remarkably little has been done to assess to what degree EU counter-terrorism policies have achieved the stated objectives”, says the adopted text, which invites the European Commission to produce a “full and detailed evaluation” of the counter-terrorism measures taken so far in Europe. This assessment should weigh whether these policies have been based on evidence (and not on assumptions), their effectiveness and impact on civil liberties and fundamental rights, it adds.

MEPs also urge the Commission to draw up a map of all existing counter-terrorism policies in Europe and establish whether these measures are subject to effective democratic scrutiny.

Costs of counter-terrorism measures

The European Commission should draft a full report “on all resources spent by the European Union, the EU Member States and private companies on measures with counter-terrorism objectives, directly or indirectly”. These would include spending for IT counter-terrorism staff, systems and databases, the protection of fundamental rights and data protection, democracy and the rule of law, funding of counter-terrorism related research, and the development of the relevant EU budget lines since 2001, says the resolution.

The EU executive should also establish what share of these costs is paid by the private sector and which business sectors benefit from counter-terrorism policies, it adds.

Guantánamo

The EU must help the US to find appropriate ways to close the Guantánamo detention facility and ensure that its prisoners get a fair trial, says the approved text.

Victims’ rights and protection of civil liberties

Parliament calls for special attention to be paid to the victims of terrorism and says a uniform set of standards must be laid down for protecting and supporting victims, including witnesses.

The Commission should table proposals to protect civil liberties better and enhance the transparency in the context of counter-terrorism measures, e.g. by creating a Freedom of Information Act, say MEPs.

Parliament also underlines the need to put forward a legislative framework for data protection, which it says should also apply in the common foreign and security policy field.

Press release

*Procedure: Non-legislative resolution
Debate took place on 12/09.2011*

Contact :

Natalia DASILVA

BXL: (+32) 2 28 44301

STR: (+33) 3 881 73661

PORT: (+32) 498 98 39 85

EMAIL: libe-press@europarl.europa.eu

Paola BUONADONNA

ADDINFO: (+44) 207 227 43 35

STR: (+33) 3 881 74822

PORT: (+44) 7 786 060 531

EMAIL: Press-en@europarl.europa.eu

EMAIL: paola.buonadonna@europarl.europa.eu