

EN

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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(13.3.2025)

The Commission, in collaboration with Member States, continues to follow the fate of EU citizens who travelled to conflict zones like Syria to join terrorist organisations and have not returned or whose deaths remain unconfirmed.

Member States are primarily responsible for matters of citizenship and border control, and they share pertinent information with EU agencies to address security threats effectively. The EU supports coordinated efforts through Europol, Frontex, and intelligence-sharing mechanisms.

EU citizens, in principle, cannot be barred from returning unless their nationality is revoked. For those who return and constitute a security threat, prosecution is a primary tool. The EU Counter-Terrorism Directive¹ obligates Member States to ensure that acts of terrorism and the support thereof are punishable as criminal offences.

Evidence collection, including battlefield materials, is increasingly coordinated to strengthen cases. Rehabilitation and reintegration programs are also employed, particularly for minors and lower-level affiliates.

Frontex enhances border security by providing operational support to migration management², while Europol facilitates intelligence sharing. Together, these measures aim to prevent re-entry of high-risk individuals and ensure accountability for their actions.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32017L0541>

² Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 on European Border and Coast Guard, Article 40, paragraph 4.