

EN

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Answer given by Mr Brunner
on behalf of the European Commission
(29.8.2025)

1. The Commission takes all forms of violent extremism seriously, including those related to animal rights activism. Acts like harming individuals, committing arson that endangers lives, or threatening such actions may be serious offences under national law. If these acts aim to intimidate the population, compel government actions, or destabilise political or social structures, they may fall under Directive (EU) 2017/541 on combating terrorism¹. Ultimately, national judicial authorities decide if an act qualifies as a terrorist offence based on the case facts.

2. The primary responsibility for detecting and tackling extremist violence rests with Member States. The Commission supports these efforts through tools such as the EU Knowledge Hub on the Prevention of Radicalisation², which connects policymakers and practitioners to exchange expertise. In cases with a cross-border dimension, Member States can request operational support from Europol.

3. Mapping threats or setting up reporting mechanisms, like hotlines, is a national responsibility. However, the Commission encourages Member States to use EU cooperation frameworks, including Europol, to enhance their response to violent extremism. Europol has identified advocacy for environmental and animal rights as themes in the rhetoric of left-wing and anarchist terrorist groups, as noted in the 2025 Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT)³.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2017/541/oj/eng>.

² https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/eu-knowledge-hub-prevention-radicalisation_en.

³ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-events/main-reports/tesat-report>.