

# The European Homeland Security State. EU Anti-Terror Drills and Fear Campaigns

European Union Coordinated Counter Terrorism Exercise in Dublin

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Region: [Europe](#)

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The events of 9/11 in the US not only led to the attack on several sovereign nations but the government under George W. Bush established the so called “Homeland Security” and proceeded to implement plans to curtail civil rights. First the “Patriot Act” was passed, then the “National Defence Authorisation Act”.

The combination of these acts and presidential “Executive Orders” transformed the American society. Where previously at least some basic rights existed a basically lawless society was created. The territory of the USA has been declared a battleground. Americans can now be killed on US soil without trial or due process. They can be held indefinitely without charge or without ever knowing why. The inalienable rights believed to be guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and the Constitution have proved to be illusions.

All of this was made possible by creating fear among the population through permanent media propaganda about a terrorist threat. Americans and people in the “western world” were and are made to believe that in order to have security and live in peace they have to give up their liberty. They were made to believe that it is not the foreign policy of their own governments that creates terrorism but enemies envying their freedom and prosperity.

Is Europe and Ireland now heading down the same road? In an [article published last week](#) the journal.ie reported (emphasis added):

A NUMBER OF gardaí took part in a European Union Coordinated Counter Terrorism Exercise in Dublin this afternoon.

The operation included a simulated hostage rescue scenario that required sea-based, land-based and airborne elements.

Three other police forces from European jurisdictions attended the exercise at the ESB Generating Station at Pigeon House Road in Dublin 4.



**Photo credit: Leon Farrell/ Photocall Ireland; [source](#)**

The fear-based propaganda did not catch on so much in Europe where large portions of the populace do not believe in the goods of fighting wars for corporate interests in various

regions of the world. The desire for peace after the experiences of 2 devastating world wars has been used cleverly to bring about the Europe we see today. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the EU was an attempt to keep the myth that Europe was build to maintain the peace alive a little longer.

In reality western Europe, later the EU, was always dominated by the interests of the USA. During the cold war it was the beachhead against the USSR and after its breakdown it became the tool to expand the sphere of US/NATO domination to the nations of eastern Europe which just won their freedom. Since World War 2 western Europe followed in the footsteps of the US in all major questions of war and peace. In one way or another European nations were involved actively in all recent US/NATO led wars.

While recently Europe is engaging more actively in warfare (Libya, Mali) the economic situation inside the EU is anything but stable and the political situation is becoming more and more unstable as people across the EU begin to question the direction in which the EU is going. The currency system is on life support, unemployment is generally rising, people across the EU become slowly but surely disillusioned about the “European Project”. It is in those times when external threats come in handy to deflect attention away from the problems and to create fear. This is the context in which the recent EU-wide anti terrorist drill on the 17th and 18th of April took place. It was led by the Atlas Network.

Planned in 1996 the “Atlas Network” was officially created in 2001 using the pretext of the 9/11 events. It is a network of specialist units of national police forces of all 27 European member states. It works under the supervision and is financed by the “Directorate General of Home Affairs” of the EU Commission. Neither the EU Commission nor the “Directorate” are democratically elected entities. As these units are answerable not to national governments but to the “Directorate” they are removed from democratic control and thus morph into kind of “Federal Special Police”. The participation of foreign police units in the exercise in Dublin demonstrates that under this network these units can be dispatched everywhere in the EU.

Interestingly it is the Boston Marathon Bombing which provides the pretext for holding the EU wide drills. Here is the Press Release of the EU Commission:

European Commission

Press release

Brussels, 17 April 2013

The ATLAS Network prepares for the biggest anti-terrorism exercise at EU level

✖ On April 17 and 18, 2013, the EU Member States anti-terrorist police forces are uniting as part of the European sponsored ATLAS Network, which carries out the most complex preparation and crises response simulation so far at European level. The simulation involves simultaneous terrorist attacks in 9 different EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Romania).

EU Commissioner for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmström said: “The fight against terrorism is one of the key challenges to our internal security. Terrorism does not recognise borders and maintaining public security is a complex challenge which requires the coordination of our efforts. I believe that the cooperation

between police authorities in Europe is more necessary now than ever and I welcome the exercise of the ATLAS network.”

The ATLAS Network contributes to increasing the proficiency and expertise of special intervention units, by establishing common platforms for training and tactics, sharing equipment, and by establishing close cooperation in trans-border areas of Member States, in turn benefitting the public security.

Past terrorist attacks, carried out both by individuals and groups, both abroad and in Europe have shown great sophistication and coordination by the terrorist groups. The 2008 Mumbai coordinated attacks, the Al Qaeda 2012 attacks on the Algerian gas production plant, as well as the recent Boston marathon bombings highlight the need to increase protection against attacks on both critical infrastructures and other public areas in a national and cross-border context. In order to ensure equal protection for all citizens in the EU, the ATLAS Network exchanges best practices and procedures and undertakes joint training exercises. In order to prepare against terrorist attacks, real life simulations of terrorist acts are carried out by Atlas members of the anti-terrorist units from different Member States.

The 2013 practical exercise, named “Common Challenge” simulates terrorist attacks in 9 different EU Member States in different areas of public life. Simulated terrorist targets include attacks on power plants, schools, and several transport modes (shops, busses and trains). Therefore, the Atlas “Common Challenge 2013”, the largest of exercise of this kind, will help practice and draw lessons on how to further strengthen preparation and crises response. The European Commission’s Directorate-General for Home Affairs is responsible for the coordination of the simulation exercise, which is carried out jointly with the ATLAS Presidency held by the German Police Special units (GSG9).

The ATLAS Network is an example of the pro-active stance against terrorism and underlines the solidarity and cooperation between European Union Member States as set in Article 222 of the Lisbon Treaty, contributing to ensuring the protection of citizens and public security in EU.

### Background

The Atlas Network, created in 2001, is an association consisting of special police units of the 27 EU Member States working on countering terrorism and criminal acts. The Network is financed and supported by the European Commission, Directorate General for Home Affairs. The goal of Atlas Network is to improve cooperation among the police units and to enhance skills by training and exchange of best practices.

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