



Counter Drone Security. The Commission presents its EU Action Plan

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📖 EU LAW, DEFENSE, PERSPECTIVES

Marco Stillo

On 11 February 2026, the Commission presented a new Action Plan on Drone and Counter Drone Security¹ designed to support Member States in boosting Europe's defence readiness through innovation and industrial cooperation.

Part of a broader set of initiatives brought forward by the Commission to reinforce the Union's internal security and defence priorities², the Plan finds its rationale in the fact that the recent incidents involving malicious or irresponsible use of drones entail growing security challenges for the Union. Despite the use of airborne drones is governed since 2019 by a harmonised regulatory framework, drones have been repeatedly used trespassing on Member States' airspace, disrupting airport operations and causing near misses with civilian aircraft. The

Plan focuses primarily on the civilian internal security side, where important gaps and loopholes remain to be taken care of, recommending actions that can be implemented in the short-term while also designing measures for longer-term preparedness.

The Plan is built around 4 key priorities.

First, since drones are evolving rapidly in terms of, amongst the others, speed, range, payload, autonomy and resistance to electronic warfare, counter-drone systems must also adapt fast to keep up with these improvements. Given the urgent need to increase coherence between the several EU instruments and national investments with a view to avoid overlaps, the Commission proposes a coordinated framework to boost the technological development and the production of drones and counter-drone systems building on i) investing where it

¹ Com. Comm. COM(2026) 81 final of 11.02.2026, *Action Plan on Drone and Counter Drone Security*.

² For further information see our previous article, available at the following [LINK](#).



really matters, ii) a new approach to testing innovative solutions, iii) targeting safety requirements and a certification model for counter-drone systems, iv) interoperability, and v) a drones and counter-drone systems production increase. Moreover, the Commission will, on the one hand, propose a Drone Security Package to adapt the airborne drone framework to nowadays' security realities and, on the other hand, present regulatory simplification measures for drones aimed at introducing flexibility with regard to, amongst other things, the need of pre-approval by authorities and the associated administrative red tape. Finally, the Commission will issue non-binding guidelines for resilience-enhancing measures, including on countering threats posed by drones and the use of geofencing functionalities³.

Second, detection, tracking and identification are fundamental in the fight against malicious drone activities, to improve situational awareness of drone operations. Member States, therefore, should ensure that relevant data is shared among competent authorities in civil aviation, law enforcement and the military, thereby allowing to monitor and assess threat levels and ensure a faster response and enforcement against drone operators that do not respect security measures. Moreover, the Commission will launch a call for expressions of interest to Member States and industry to live test and deploy cellular based detection systems including 5G networks, which offer precise and real-time tracking of flying objects.

Third, while operational incident response falls on Member States, coordinated actions at EU level can support them in deploying effective

counter-drone solutions, so that a multi-layered approach combining several technical measures to counter the large spectrum of threats posed by non-cooperative drones. More particularly, since, in light of the evolving security situation, critical infrastructures need to be equipped with state-of-the-art latest counter-drone equipment and systems, the Commission will work with Member States to launch an EU Counter-drone Deployment Initiative for Critical Infrastructures as well as to set up Rapid Counter-drone Emergency Response Teams acting as rapidly deployable reserve units and equipped with the latest technologies for detection and response. Moreover, the Commission will support Frontex in training drone and counter-drone pilots, organizing live demonstrations and prize-based innovation challenges in realistic border settings, thereby enhancing the integration of drones and counter-drone skills. The framework of the 2023 Communication on countering threats posed by drones⁴ should also be expanded towards a set of common binding and non-binding rules for Member State authorities, private operators and all players involved.

Finally, the Plan highlights the need to further strengthen Europe's defence readiness to counter drone threats. More particularly, efforts at European level should lead to a comprehensive drone and counter-drone capability and offer a multi-layered and multi-level overarching approach supporting decision-making processes and ensuring a continuous situational awareness. Member States will also need to invest into a mass production capacity for drones and counter-drone systems either to actively deploy them or to stock-pile them as strategic reserve.

³ Geofencing is a location-based technology that establishes virtual boundaries around a designated physical area using GPS, RFID, Wi-Fi, or cellular data, allowing businesses and individuals to automate specific actions when a device enters or exits the defined perimeter.

⁴ Com. Comm. COM(2023) 659 final of 18.10.2023, *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on countering potential threats posed by drones*.



Marco Stillo

ASSOCIATE

 m.stillo@dejalex.com

 +39 02 72554.1

 Via San Paolo 7
20121 - Milano

MILANO

Via San Paolo, 7 · 20121 Milano, Italia
T. +39 02 72554.1 · F. +39 02 72554.400
milan@dejalex.com

ROMA

Via Vincenzo Bellini, 24 · 00198 Roma, Italia
T. +39 06 809154.1 · F. +39 06 809154.44
rome@dejalex.com

BRUXELLES

Chaussée de La Hulpe 187 · 1170 Bruxelles, Belgique
T. +32 (0)26455670 · F. +32 (0)27420138
brussels@dejalex.com

MOSCOW

Potapovsky Lane, 5, build. 2, 4th floor, office 401/12/9 · 101000, Moscow, Russia
T. +7 495 792 54 92 · F. +7 495 792 54 93
moscow@dejalex.com