



Firearms: Agreement on Commission proposal to increase citizens' security

Brussels, 20 December 2016

After a year of discussions, the European Parliament and Council have reached a provisional political agreement on the Firearms Directive.

The Commission proposed a [revision of the current EU rules on firearms](#) on 18 November 2015 to make it harder to legally acquire high capacity weapons in the European Union, allow better tracking of legally held firearms thus reducing the risk of diversion into illegal markets, and strengthen cooperation between Member States.

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** said: *"We have fought hard for an ambitious deal that reduces the risk of shootings in schools, summer camps or terrorist attacks with legally held firearms. Of course we would have liked to go further, but I am confident that the current agreement represents a milestone in gun control in the EU."*

The provisional political agreement retains a majority of what the Commission originally proposed, such as the ban of automatic firearms transformed into semi-automatic firearms, the inclusion of collectors and museums in the scope of the directive, the regulation of alarm and acoustic weapons, the regulation of Internet sales, the regulation of deactivated weapons and more exchange of information between Member States.

At the same time, the Commission regrets that some parts of the original proposal were not supported by the Parliament and the Council. The Commission had proposed a greater level of ambition with a complete ban of the most dangerous semi-automatic firearms, including all semi-automatic firearms of the AK47 or AR15 families and a ban of assault weapons for private collectors. The Commission also regrets that the magazine size was not limited to 10 rounds for all semi-automatic firearms.

However, considering that the overall package is an improvement compared to the current situation, the Commission can accept the compromise found.

Together with the technical rules introducing strict [harmonised standards for the deactivation of firearms](#), which are directly applicable since April 2016, the Firearms Directive will reduce the probability of dangerous but legally held weapons falling into the hands of criminals and terrorists.

Background

The preliminary political agreement reached by the European Parliament, Council and Commission early December was confirmed by the EU Member States' permanent representatives (COREPER) on 20 December. It is now subject to confirmation by the European Parliament's Internal Market Committee at its meeting in January, and subsequently to a plenary vote of the European Parliament and formal approval by the EU Council of Ministers.

Security has been a constant theme since the beginning of this Commission's mandate, from President **Juncker's** [Political Guidelines of July 2014](#) to the latest [State of the Union address of September 2016](#).

Mass shootings and terrorist attacks in Europe have highlighted the dangers posed by illegal and legal arms circulating across the EU.

Building on the [European Agenda on Security](#) adopted in April 2015, in the autumn 2015 the Commission put forward a comprehensive set of proposals to tighten the legal acquisition and possession of firearms, as well as an [Action Plan to target the illicit trafficking of firearms and explosives](#).

For more information

[Firearms Directive: Frequently Asked Questions – MEMO/16/4465](#)

[Commission proposal to amend the Firearms Directive](#)

[Report on the evaluation of the Firearms Directive](#)

[Implementing Regulation on deactivation standards](#)

[European Agenda on Security](#)

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