An Introduction to Hybrid Threats

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A world of interconnected systems...

...and emerging threats
Beyond Protection – Hybrid Threats

Hybrid threats can be of unprecedented complexity and sophistication...
Hybrid threats policy

JOINT COMMUNICATION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL
Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats a European Union response

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Hybrid threats definition

The mixture of coercive and subversive activity, conventional and unconventional methods (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, technological), which can be used in a coordinated manner by state or non-state actors to achieve specific objectives while remaining below the threshold of formally declared warfare.
Hybrid threats background

• A continuously changing environment in terms of threats in the EU and in the eastern and southern neighbourhood.
• Recent incidents demonstrated the need for action
• Hybrid threats exploit cascading phases or exploitation of modern vulnerabilities in interconnected systems.
• Maximization of the impact of events that otherwise would be considered as isolated ones
• Attacks to infrastructures in order to undermine the trust in institutions
• To an untrained eye may seem a sum of uncoordinated actions – in reality they aim at maximising the societal impact
Hybrid threats background

- Brings together civil preparedness, private sector, defence and military capabilities
- The mixture of attack vectors in a hybrid threat can be extremely complicated
- The answer to this is the concept of Resilience.
Hybrid threats joint communication

• 22 actions
• Recognising the threat
  • “Hybrid threats aim to exploit a country’s vulnerabilities and often seek to undermine fundamental democratic values and liberties.” These may be time dependent!
• Improving awareness
  • To effectively counter hybrid threats, it is important to improve information exchange and promote relevant intelligence-sharing across sectors and between the European Union, its Member States and partners.
Hybrid threats joint communication

- Organising EU response – building resilience
  - To effectively counter hybrid threats, the potential vulnerabilities of key infrastructures, supply chains and society must be addressed.
- Preventing, responding to crisis and recovering
  - A rapid response to events triggered by hybrid threats is essential
- Increasing cooperation with NATO
Action 5: The Commission, in cooperation with Member States and stakeholders, will identify common tools, including indicators, with a view to improve protection and resilience of critical infrastructure against hybrid threats in relevant sectors.