

# Tackling threats to transport and other key infrastructure

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Effective and efficient transportation plays a crucial role not only in the everyday lives of citizens, but also in ensuring the on-going economic wellbeing of communities and countries. People are able to get to work on time, goods are transported in a cost-effective manner and energy is used as efficiently as possible.

This is why disruption to transport, whether intentional or not, can cause such damage. And as public transport is by its nature open and accessible to everyone, it is susceptible to terrorist attack, as seen all too clearly in the 2005 London bombings and the coordinated attack on four commuter trains in Madrid in 2004.

Other critical infrastructures such as power grids or water plants are also a growing concern to governments. Hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis and other disasters - both natural and industrial - like the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011 underline the fact that risks are not only related to terrorism.

This is why the EU SECONOMICS [project](#) is of such importance to the long term wellbeing of Europe. By bringing together a multinational team of security practitioners, economists and engineers, the project aims to produce a policy toolkit that can effectively assist decision makers in identifying and reacting to public transportation and critical infrastructures threats.

The project began in 2012 under the assumption that achieving 100% protection of transport and other critical infrastructures is neither realistic nor sustainable. The goal instead, says the consortium, should be on minimising threats in the most cost-efficient way possible. SECONOMICS therefore first set out to identify and mitigate major security threats by exploring the implementation of coordinated solutions that could work at the European level.

The project has also investigated the economic causes and consequences of insecurity and the impact on the perception of citizens and the direct and indirect costs of implementation. Cost calculations placed specific emphasis on increased hidden costs, decreased efficiency and trans-boundary impacts such as the interaction between security behaviour and economic growth.

Following on from this, project case studies successfully identified key security threats in transport - air and metro - and other critical infrastructure. In this way, the challenges of achieving pan-European security coordination have been dealt with.

It is expected that SECONOMICS, which is due for completion in January 2015, will provide a significant contribution to the development of state of the art security modelling, using the latest technological tools available. Through cutting edge risk assessments and analysis of the social context, it is hoped that optimal policies will be developed.

Indeed, the lasting impact of the project, says the consortium will be a methodological revolution driven by a common, but diverse set, of modelling tools that seamlessly transverses the social, economic and technological domains. The project is being carried out by an international consortium operating with 11 partners from seven different countries.

**More information:** [www.seconomicsproject.eu/](http://www.seconomicsproject.eu/)

Provided by CORDIS

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