

PROTECT WHAT MATTERS.

EUROPEAN DEFENCE

February 2026



In today's fractured and uncertain world, we cannot rely on others to defend Europe. Europe's defence is our strategic responsibility, and this responsibility begins with a strengthened budget – for defence and for our defence industry.

Our aims

- **Ensuring defence readiness by 2030** starting with supporting Ukraine.
- **Rebuilding European defence** through closing critical capability gaps and supporting the EU defence industry.
- **Preparing the defence of tomorrow** by building a true EU-wide **market for defence** and accelerating the transformation of defence through **disruptive innovation**.
- **Preparing for military contingencies**, including through stockpiling, facilitating rapid movement of troops and assets across the Union and increased cooperation.



Boosting investment

With our defence plan Readiness 2030, we are facilitating investment of up to **€800 billion** over the next four years.

- The **SAFE** instrument, with **€150 billion** in loans is helping 19 Member States to immediately and massively scale up their defence investments through joint procurement from the European defence industry, focusing on priority capabilities.
- The **National Escape Clause**, under the Stability and Growth Pact, activated by 16 Member States to leverage up to **€650 billion**.
- The **European Investment Bank** has stepped up its investments in defence and security to **€3.5 billion** in 2025 and **€4.5 billion** in 2026.
- Through **cohesion policy**, Member States will be able to direct part of their investment to defence.

Strengthening EU Defence industry competitiveness and readiness:

The EU is committed to ramp-up massively the European defence industrial production capacity and to support Member States to acquire and safeguard critical capabilities they need.

- The **European Defence Fund**, mobilised **€6.4 billion** since 2021 to develop tomorrow's defence technologies and equipment.
- **The Act in Support of Ammunition Production** ramped-up ammunition production capacity and **€500 million** to stimulate domestic production.
- **The EU granted €310 million** through the **European defence industry reinforcement** through common procurement act for cooperation in defence procurement between Member States.
- This led to a more programmatic approach for defence within the European Defence Industry Programme (EDIP): **€1.5 billion over the period 2025-2027** to strengthen the responsiveness of the defence industry, ensure the availability and supply of defence products; and foster defence cooperation with Ukraine.
- To act swiftly where a joint approach is most effective, the EU proposed four initial **European Readiness Flagships**: The European Drone Defence Initiative, the Eastern Flank Watch, the European Air Shield, and the European Space Shield. These will reinforce Europe's ability to deter and defend across land, air, sea, cyber, and space while contributing directly to NATO capability targets.
- Defence remains a cross-cutting priority in the **next long-term EU budget**, with a proposed budget for defence and space in the European Competitiveness Fund of **€131 billion**, representing a five-fold increase.



Supporting Ukraine

- **€69.3 billion** in military assistance under the **European Peace Facility** and by Member States individually.
- The **Ukraine Support Loan** will include a **€60 billion** package to support Ukraine's defence industrial capacities and to procure military equipment.
- Over 85,000 Ukrainian soldiers trained.
- Associate Ukraine to EU initiatives to develop and procure defence capabilities.
- **EU Defence Innovation Office in Kyiv** supports joint military innovations.
- Integration of the Ukrainian defence industry into the European defence industry.



Driving innovation

- **Defence Industry Transformation roadmap** to accelerate the modernisation of the European defence industry, boost innovation and support emerging defence players.
- Speed up the use of **advanced technologies**, boost production capacity through innovation and foster the skills needed to sustain Europe's technological edge.
- Facilitating **innovative start-ups and SMEs** in key sectors such as AI, drones and space technologies are reshaping the battlefield.
- These efforts are backed by the **EU Defence Innovation Scheme (EUDIS)**, supporting SMEs and start-ups in defence by providing funding access and lowering entry barriers, focusing on development, scaling, and market readiness.

Doubling down on military mobility and infrastructure

- **Military mobility roadmap** to ensure that armed forces, equipment, and supplies can move quickly and efficiently across Europe.
- **10 times more funds** dedicated to military mobility reaching up to **€17.65 billion** for the period 2028-2034.