



Update on EU Security and Defence Policy - Military Mobility and Cyber Defence

By Eleanor Doorley

@Doorley_Nora

Introduction

In response to the deteriorating security environment in Europe following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the European Commission published a new Security and Defence Package on November 10, 2022, which includes a plan to improve military mobility and an update on the bloc's cyber defence policy.

This Dods EU Political Intelligence report provides an outline of the two-part package, including institutional background and details of next steps.

European Security and Defence Package

Military Mobility

The new [Action Plan on Military Mobility 2.0](#) is the latest in a series of EU initiatives designed to enable the swift movement of military personnel and assets within the union and beyond. The plan aims to address bottlenecks by ensuring European armed forces have access to strategic lift capabilities and that infrastructure is better protected from cyber and other hybrid threats. The European Commission will support the plan with funding instruments such as the Connecting Europe Facility and the European Defence Fund.

The new initiative builds on the first [Action Plan](#) on military mobility launched in 2018 and will cover the 2022-2026 period. It includes measures to identify gaps in infrastructure to allow for the large-scale movements of military forces at short notice, such as fuel supply chain requirements and ensuring civilian roads and bridges can support heavy-duty military vehicles and equipment; the digitisation of administrative processes related to customs logistics and military mobility systems; measures to protect transport infrastructure from cyber-attacks and other hybrid threats; maximising synergies with the civilian sector to enhance the mobility of the armed forces, especially by air and sea; and reinforcing cooperation with NATO and key strategic partners, such as the US, Canada and Norway, and promoting connectivity with regional partners and enlargement countries such as Ukraine, Moldova and the Western Balkans.

"One of the main lessons from the delivery of weapons and military equipment to Ukraine to fight Russia's invasion is that every second matters. Fast military mobility is crucial to respond to crises emerging at our borders and beyond. Much has been done to date, but the Strategic Compass has set higher ambitions and we are delivering," Josep Borrell, the EU's High Representative and Vice-President, said in a statement at the launch of the package.

The [EU Budget for 2023](#), which was agreed on by the European Parliament and the European Council on 14 November following a proposal from the Commission, plans to direct €295.2m for Military Mobility to improve civilian and military mobility.

On November 15, the EU announced it had formally approved the UK's request to participate in a military mobility project within the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) framework. In a [statement](#) Borrell said the UK's participation, after the US, Canada and Norway joined last year, was proof of the importance of the project which aims to simplify and standardise cross-border military transport procedures to enable the swift movement of personnel and assets throughout the EU by road, rail, sea, or air. PESCO provides a framework for closer defence cooperation among the 25 participating EU member states to develop capabilities, coordinate investments, enhance the operational readiness, interoperability, and resilience of their armed forces, and

collaborate in projects. In late 2020 the EU Council agreed to allow third countries to be invited to participate in specific PESCO projects.

The issue of military mobility has been a key topic of discussion among Members of the European Parliament. It featured prominently in a meeting of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (EP SEDE) on October 27, 2022, during which the Director Security and Defence Policy at the European External Action Service (EEAS), Joanneke Balfoort, provided an overview of the state of play in the implementation of PESCO in the EU. The French centre-left MEP and SEDE Chair, Nathalie Loiseau, said military mobility appeared to be moving in the right direction on the back of stronger investment. Earlier that month, at an October 19 [meeting](#) of the Parliament's Committee on Budgets (EP BUDG), MEPs had called for an increase in military mobility funding as part of a response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

On May 5, MEPs adopted a [resolution](#) on the impact of the war in Ukraine on the EU's transport and tourism sectors. During the session, MEPs called for the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) review to be used to significantly increase investment in transport infrastructure connections with the Western Balkans, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. Parliament also called on the Commission, Council and Parliament to use the review to revise the new TEN-T maps, and to propose an addendum for Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, in order to meet the entirely new transport needs arising from the Ukraine war.

Cyber Defence

The new package's [Joint Communication on an EU cyber defence policy](#) aims to boost the EU's defence capabilities and improve coordination between the military and civilian communities by enhancing cyber crisis management and strengthening the European Defence Technological Industrial Base (EDTIB). It is also designed to help attract, train, and retain cyber talent and, as with the mobility plan, step-up cooperation with the EU's partners.

Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had called for development of a European Cyber Defence Policy in her [2021 State of the Union address](#) after a spate of cyber-attacks on European energy networks, transport infrastructure and space assets. The Commission and the High Representative, who have encouraged member states to contribute at national level, will monitor progress of the cyber initiative and present an annual report to the Council.

Margrethe Vestager, Commissioner for Competition, said the EU had seen an increasing number of malicious actions in cyberspace coming from both state and non-state actors, including an attack on Viasat satellites which provide high-speed broadband to both commercial and military customers. She urged member states that have not yet imposed restrictions on high-risk 5G suppliers do to so without delay to avoid increasing vulnerabilities in European networks. "There is no European defence without cyber defence," she said at the launch.

On the same day as the EU announcement, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg [warned](#) of the growing cyber threat at the alliance's 2022 Cyber Defence Pledge conference in Rome. "Cyber is a constantly contested space and the line between peace, crisis and conflict is blurred," he said. "I call on allies to recommit to cyber defence, with more money, more expertise, and enhanced cooperation. This is a vital part of our collective defence and we are all in this together."

The EU has been developing its civilian cyber policy for more than a decade, reflecting the growing reliance on digital technology and processes across the single market. The first EU-wide law on cybersecurity, [the NIS Directive](#), came into force in 2016 to achieve a common level of security of network and information systems across the EU. Since then, initiatives included the 2019 [EU](#)



[Cybersecurity Act](#) to establish a framework of cybersecurity certification of products, services and a common approach to 5G networks with the EU [5G Toolbox](#) in 2020.

Members of the European Parliament have long argued that a common EU cyber defence policy and increased cooperation within the bloc are essential elements in building a stronger European Defence Union. In March 2022, the parliament published a legislative [proposal](#) for a framework for common rules and measures on cybersecurity within the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies. It builds on the [EU Strategy for the Security Union](#) and the [EU's Cybersecurity Strategy](#) for the Digital Decade and aims to improve all entities' resilience and incident response capacities. Before that in October, 2021, the Parliament had adopted a [resolution](#) on the state of EU cyber defence capabilities.

Next Steps

Cyber Defence Policy

The Commission and the High Representative, including in his capacity as Head of the European Defence Agency (EDA), will present an annual report to the Council of the EU to monitor and assess the progress of the implementation of the actions in the Joint Communication on the EU Policy on Cyber Defence. The Commission has encouraged member states to contribute to the implementation measures taking place in national or in cooperation formats.

Military Mobility

The Commission has submitted the plan on military mobility to the EU member States for consideration and endorsement. It aims to produce periodic joint progress reports on the implementation of the plan for member states, with the first due by November 2023.

Eleanor Doorley covers European foreign affairs and defence at Dods EU Political Intelligence in Brussels.

About Dods Political Intelligence

We provide insight, intelligence and impact through our comprehensive suite of policy tools. Our services comprise of three main elements: *Dods Consultancy* – based in Brussels and London, our industry experts offer real-time analysis and impartial guidance on the latest policy developments and trends. *Dods Monitoring* – our platform offers instant alerts and contextual insight from over 13,000 sources across the UK and the EU. *Dods People* – the original who is who in politics, Dods Parliamentary Companion, was established in 1832. Today, our stakeholder management tools cover the UK and the EU, helping you identify and communicate effectively with key contacts.

Contact Us

For further information, please visit dodspoliticalintelligence.com or contact us at customer.service@dodsgroup.com or UK customer service +44 207 593 5500 or EU customer service +32 274 182 30