

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001306/25
to the Commission
Michał Dworczyk (ECR)
(28 March 2025)

Subject: Commission declares the East Shield ‘noteworthy’ but stops short of specific pledges

Starting in 2021, hybrid attacks by the Lukashenka regime, weaponising migration, are part of a Moscow-coordinated strategy to destabilise the region. Mateusz Morawiecki’s government repeatedly warned EU partners and institutions that this action bears all the hallmarks of a hybrid war and that the Polish border — also an external EU and NATO border — needs to be adequately protected. Unfortunately, these warnings went unheeded for political reasons, including as a result of the irresponsible actions of the then opposition, which questioned the point of border protection and sparked disputes on the topic. Despite these attacks and the lack of support from Brussels, Morawiecki’s government never shied away from its security responsibilities and took decisive action, such as the building of a physical barrier at the Belarusian border.

The Commission’s white paper on European defence recognises this doggedness, describing the East Shield as a ‘noteworthy’ exercise. This exercise follows on directly from the policy led by Mateusz Morawiecki’s government. However, unlike other parts of the document in which the Commission explicitly declares its intention to take specific measures or pledges forms of support, here there is no indication whether there are plans for financial or institutional support for the implementation of the project ⁽¹⁾.

1. Why does the Commission stop short of pledging specific support for the East Shield in its white paper?
2. Are related consultations or analyses currently under way?
3. Does the Commission intend to provide financial support for the project? If so, how much, from which funds, and in which mode?

Submitted: 28.3.2025

Answer given by Mr Kūbilius on behalf of the European Commission
(4 July 2025)

Serious and persistent threats at the Eastern EU border may entail the weaponisation of migration which poses a challenge for national security of the concerned Member States, but also the security of the EU as a whole.

This is what the Commission stressed in the communication on the weaponisation of migration which recalled the legal context in which any exceptional measure to tackle this threat can be taken by Member States, including as arising from case-law ⁽¹⁾.

The situation also calls for a resolute EU response which should be comprehensive, addressing both a potential threat of conventional military aggression and hybrid campaigns.

The White Paper for European Defence — Readiness 2030 ⁽²⁾ acknowledges the importance of defending all EU borders, in particular the Eastern border. The project related to an Eastern Border Shield has been considered a noteworthy exercise by a number of Member States to confront the growing challenges in the region.

The Security Action for Europe Regulation ⁽³⁾, the European Defence Industry Programme ⁽⁴⁾ (subject to its negotiation by the co-legislators), and dual-use EU instruments (such as the Border Management Visa Policy Instrument) could provide the basis for additional efforts in support of Member States. The Commission has engaged in dialogue with Member States to explore possible options.

¹ All the Commission does is make a banal comment about the need to protect the EU’s land, air and sea borders, stating: ‘The project for an Eastern Border Shield is a noteworthy exercise by a number of Member States to confront the growing challenges in that region. It would establish an integrated land border management system that is designed to strengthen the EU’s external land border with Russia and Belarus against military and hybrid threats. That would include a comprehensive mix of physical barriers, infrastructure development and modern surveillance systems.’ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/document/download/30b50d2c-49aa-4250-9ca6-27a0347cf009_en?filename=White%20Paper.pdf, p. 9.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52024DC0570>.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025JC0120>.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025PC0122>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52024PC0150>.