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Answer given by Mr Kubilius
on behalf of the European Commission
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The European Defence Fund (EDF) aims to support collaborative research and development (R&D) projects based on common priorities agreed by the Member States.

The development of a next-generation main battle tank (MBT) is one of these priorities, as set out in the EU Capability Development Plan¹ and the Strategic Compass². In line with this, the EDF launched a call for proposals in 2023 to initiate such development, complementing the multinational Main Ground Combat System programme led by France and Germany.

Through this call, Member States agreed on the requirements for key technologies necessary for the next-generation European MBT, and industry was invited to establish a consortium to conduct the necessary R&D. As a result, two projects (i.e. Main ARmoured Tank of Europe³ and Technologies for existing and Future MBTs⁴) were selected for funding to conduct the initial R&D stages. A follow-up R&D action for these projects is high on the agenda for discussions with Member States, thus demonstrating a convergence of national plans.

While Member States are free to decide which defence capabilities to develop and procure, the EU could further incentivise Member States to engage in joint procurement, which would reduce the number of systems used in the different defence capability areas. The Security Action for Europe Regulation⁵ is a case in point, as it encourages Member States to buy together by offering them access to loans and simplified procurement rules, including in land combat capabilities.

¹ <https://eda.europa.eu/publications-and-data/thematic-policy-reports/the-2023-eu-capability-development-priorities>.

² https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/strategic-compass-security-and-defence-1_en.

³ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/document/download/b816bef0-0a9f-439d-9f30-2dfc97373b55_en?filename=EDF-2023-DA-GROUND-MBT%20MARTE.pdf.

⁴ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/document/download/37439eaf-8092-4e5b-ba7d-216ec4fa891b_en?filename=EDF-2023-DA-GROUND-MBT%20FMBTech.pdf.

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/1106/oj/eng>.