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Answer given by Mr Kubilius
on behalf of the European Commission
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In the White Paper for European Defence – Readiness 2030¹, the Commission recalled that even though Member States' defence spending has grown by over 31% on aggregate since 2021, it remains far below US levels.

Rebuilding European defence needs sustained public and private investment. Even with the additional budgetary leeway introduced by the ReArm Europe Plan², the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) must considerably increase EU support to strategic European defence investments.

The Commission considers that defence-related funding under the next MFF, notably in support to research and development (R&D), shall primarily be driven by these objectives, while considering, where relevant, potential dual-use applications, such as supporting related firefighting activities. The Commission's report 'Safer Together'³ highlights firefighters' role in emergencies, including in Ukraine and their need for modern technologies for situational awareness and safe evacuations.

The future European Competitiveness Fund (ECF)⁴ will provide significant support to investment in defence, security and space. As such, the Commission proposed a dedicated 'Resilience, Security, Defence and Space' policy window, under the ECF, with a EUR 131 billion budget. This window will address civil security industry needs. Defence industrial instruments and its budget cannot replace civil protection instruments. In addition, the Commission proposal for the next MFF foresees that dual-use R&D activities may be supported under the programme Horizon Europe 2028-2034⁵.

Finally, in line with the Preparedness Union Strategy⁶, the Commission aims to boost the support to the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, notably for aerial-fire-fighting means.

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6d5db69-e0ab-4bec-9dc0-3867b4373019_en?filename=White%20paper%20for%20European%20defence%20%E2%80%93%20Readiness%202030.pdf.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/2653/oj/eng>.

³ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/5bb2881f-9e29-42f2-8b77-8739b19d047c_en?filename=2024_Niinisto-report_Book_VF.pdf.

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025PC0555&qid=1753802586340>.

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025PC0543>.

⁶ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/circabc-ewpp/d/d/workspace/SpacesStore/b81316ab-a513-49a1-b520-b6a6e0de6986/download>.