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E-003919/2025

Answer given by Mr Kubilius
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.11.2025)

Member States are and will remain sovereign for their national security and defence. They are responsible for defining the capability objectives required to ensure the readiness of their national armed forces so that they can fulfil their strategic-military missions, including those undertaken within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The Commission aims, with its regulatory and budgetary capacity, to support them in enhancing defence readiness by 2030. On this basis, the Commission has put forward the Readiness 2030 plan¹, whose main pillars are the Security Action for Europe (SAFE)² instrument and the National Escape Clause (NEC) within the Stability and Growth Pact³.

The SAFE instrument aims to support financially Member States to procure defence products and other products for defence purpose. In doing so, Member States should also aim to address critical capability gaps and strengthening the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base. Conditionality is attached to ensure a balance between immediate readiness and long-term industrial strength using EU budget to derisk loans.

When it comes to the NEC, it can be activated by Member States to increase defence expenditures, with a maximum of 1.5% of their gross domestic product. The Commission supports Member States in ensuring a robust defence industrial base while gaining immediate operational readiness.

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/2025/1106/oj/eng>.

³ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/document/download/a57304ce-1a98-4a2c-aed5-36485884f1a0_en?filename=Communication-on-the-national-escape-clause.pdf.