

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000289/26
to the Commission
Petra Steger (PFE)
(26 January 2026)**

Subject: The Commission's call for a European army disregards existing treaties and threatens sovereignty and neutrality

On 11 January 2026, the European Commissioner for Defence, Andrius Kubilius, called for the creation of a 100 000-strong European army to defend the continent in case of a US withdrawal ⁽¹⁾. This call by Mr Kubilius runs counter to existing EU treaties, in particular Article 4(2) TEU, which explicitly designates national security as the sole responsibility of the Member States, and at the same time clearly contradicts the Republic of Austria's constitutionally enshrined permanent neutrality.

The call should also be seen as a further step in a systematic transfer of powers from sovereign Member States to the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union — without changes to the treaties, without democratic legitimacy and without the consent of the populations concerned. The prospect of Austrian soldiers coming under the central command of an EU Commissioner and of them potentially being drawn into international military conflicts is fundamentally incompatible with the principle of neutrality and would set a dangerous precedent for a European military union through the back door.

1. How does the Commission justify the call for a European army in the light of Article 4(2) TEU, which expressly attributes national security to the sole responsibility of the Member States?
2. How does the Commission justify its persistent disregard for Austria's constitutionally enshrined permanent neutrality and how would it ensure that Austrian soldiers are not drawn into EU military operations?
3. What mechanisms of democratic legitimation would the Commission employ prior to the creation of a European armed force, so as to ensure that this project reflects the majority will of all Member States?

Submitted: 26.1.2026

**Answer given by Mr Kubilius on behalf of the European Commission
(7 April 2026)**

The Commission acknowledges that national security is the sole responsibility of Member States. It also notes that Article 42(2) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) ⁽¹⁾ foresees that the progressive framing of a common EU defence policy will lead to a common defence, when the European Council so decides unanimously and when all Member States adopt such a decision in accordance with their constitutional requirements.

The Commission also acknowledges that under Article 42(2) TEU the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy is not to prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.

The article 23j B-VG of the Austrian Constitution governs its interaction with the provisions on the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy in the TEU.

Finally, on democratic legitimacy, the Commission emphasises that the Treaties provide for decision-making processes that ensure the participation of Member States and their democratic institutions, including unanimity in the European Council for decisions related to common defence.

The Commission remains committed to upholding the above-mentioned principles and ensuring that any future initiatives reflect the collective will of Member States and their citizens.

¹ <https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/kubilius-schlaegt-gruendung-europaeischer-armee-vor-102.html>.

⁽¹⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/teu_2008/art_42/oj/eng/.