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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu
on behalf of the European Commission
(29.7.2026)

The Commission is aware that frequent geographic mobility of armed forces personnel may weigh on private and family life, including children's well-being and work-life balance. However, the principal tasks of the armed forces of the Member States are expressly included among the essential functions of the State which the European Union must respect. Moreover, Member States' choices of military organisation are not governed, as such by EU law. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union applies to Member States only when they implement EU law¹.

Issues relating to family cohesion and child protection are addressed at EU level through the social policy provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and instruments such as Directive (EU) 2019/1158² on work-life balance for parents and carers. These measures promote reconciliation of professional and family responsibilities and a child-centred approach, which may inform national solutions, including for military families, where Member States so decide.

Housing policy largely remains a national and local responsibility. Nevertheless, several Regulations³ allow Member States to design programmes that improve access to affordable housing and services in high-cost areas, from which mobile families, including those of military personnel, may benefit on a non-discriminatory basis.

The Commission does not regulate deployment stability schemes for armed forces personnel and does not maintain a comparative inventory of such rules. Within its social policy coordination work, including the European Semester and the Social Open Method of Coordination, it promotes exchange of experience on work-life balance and social protection more broadly, where Member States choose to share relevant practices.

¹ <https://fra.europa.eu/en/eu-charter/article/51-field-application>.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1158/oj/eng>.

³ Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1057/oj>;

Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1058/2025-09-20>;
Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1060/2026-07-01>.