

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-000802/25
to the Commission
João Oliveira (The Left)
(21 February 2025)**

Subject: Stability pact escape clause to promote militarism and war

The rising cost of living is making life harder for workers and their families. More than 90 million people in the EU are at risk of poverty and social exclusion, including 20 million children. Difficulties accessing housing are becoming more acute. And yet the Commission continues to give priority to militarism and make the arms race the driver of what it sees as a war economy.

During the Munich Security Conference, the President of the Commission announced that she would propose an escape clause for the stability pact for what she euphemistically called 'defence investments', which constitute nothing more than a boost for militarism, higher military expenditure, an arms race and war.

In the light of the above:

Will the Commission propose an escape clause that could also be used for investment intended to step up public services and state social functions, raise wages in public administrations, bolster pensions, investment in the expansion and renovation of public housing stock or restoring public control of strategic economic sectors?

Submitted: 21.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr Dombrovskis on behalf of the European Commission
(14 April 2025)**

The reform of the Stability and Growth Pact ⁽¹⁾ that entered into force last year foresees scope to accommodate spending on common priorities of the EU while maintaining sound and sustainable public finances in Member States.

It explicitly indicates that social and economic resilience, including the European Pillar of Social Rights, is a common priority in the EU.

As a result, increase in social and public services spending may be put forward in Member States' medium-term fiscal-structural plans within a package of investments and reforms that underpin a more gradual fiscal adjustment, up to seven years instead of four years, thereby creating substantial additional fiscal space for such expenditures.

At the same time, the geopolitical situation has significantly worsened in recent months. This requires a fast and strong increase in spending on defence in the EU.

The activation of the National Escape Clause, in line with the conditions of Regulation 2024/1263, would allow Member States to transition to a higher level of defence expenditure without reducing the fiscal space for other expenditures in the coming years.

⁽¹⁾ https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-and-fiscal-governance/stability-and-growth-pact_en