

(English version)

Priority question for written answer P-001202/25
to the Commission
Friedrich Pürner (NI)
(20 March 2025)

Subject: A Europe ready for war by 2030

On 19 March 2025, the Commission presented the White Paper on European Defence and the ReArm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030. A total of EUR 800 billion are to be invested in programmes such as ‘ReArm Europe’ and ‘Security Action for Europe’ (SAFE EU). The Commission President emphasised that the era of the peace dividend was over and that the EU would have to switch to a war economy. The aim is to make Europe fit for war by 2030 — a choice of words that could stir up fears among the population and make them receptive to the announced ‘turning point’.

Although Article 41(2) of the Treaty on European Union prohibits military and defence expenditure from the EU budget, the Commission is planning this massive increase in military hardware. Moreover, the plans are to be adopted in an expedited procedure, deliberately without the involvement of the European Parliament, which is responsible for budgetary approval and budget review.

1. On what legal basis does the Commission justify restricting the European Parliament’s co-decision powers, thereby weakening democratic scrutiny by elected Members?
2. How does the Commission reconcile the proposal to upgrade military hardware and the coordination thereof with the EU Treaty, particularly with regard to the principle of subsidiarity?
3. What specific measures, points of contact and control mechanisms will be put in place to avoid mistakes such as those made in the acquisition of vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic — in particular under the responsibility of the Commission President — and how does the Commission ensure transparency and the enforcement of accountability in the use of funds under these programmes?

Submitted: 20.3.2025

Answer given by Mr Kubilius on behalf of the European Commission
(4 June 2025)

The deterioration of the security context requires Member States to rapidly invest in defence, with a major impact on public finances. This exceptional situation, beyond Member State control, justifies Article 122 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ⁽¹⁾ as a legal basis, allowing the Council to adopt measures in crisis situations. Security Action for Europe (SAFE) is a new specific and temporary instrument in the form of a regulation.

The role of the European Parliament is pivotal, and the Commissioner for Defence and Space is committed to regularly engage with the European Parliament.

Defence is a Member States’ prerogative. The Commission has the economic and regulatory means to support them.

SAFE loans are not expenditure arising from Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) operations with military or defence implications pursuant to Article 41(2) of the Treaty on European Union ⁽²⁾. These loans are provided on the basis of Article 122 of the TFEU.

The allocation of the EUR 150 billion loans to Member States for common procurements will be demand driven.

Member States wishing to receive loans will have to submit a Defence Industry Investment Plan to the Commission. The plan will need to include the loan size and pre-financing, a description of the activities, expenditures and measures for which the loan is requested, and, where relevant, the foreseen benefits for Ukraine.

Member States will report every six months on the progress. Where the Commission concludes that the report is unsatisfactory, the payment of all or part of the loan shall be suspended.

The Commission will provide an annual report on the use of financial assistance to the European Parliament and the Council.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX%3A12008E122%3AEN%3AHTML>.

⁽²⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/teu_2008/art_41/oj/eng.