

Action Plan on military mobility: EU takes steps towards a Defence Union

Facilitating the movement of military troops and assets is essential for the security of European citizens, and to build a more effective, responsive and joined-up Union, as identified in the [Joint Communication on improving military mobility in the EU](#) from November 2017 and called for in the [EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy](#). Today's [Action Plan](#) identifies a series of operational measures to tackle physical, procedural or regulatory barriers which hamper military mobility. Working closely with the EU Member States and all relevant actors will be key for the implementation of this Action Plan.

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: *"Promoting peace and guaranteeing the security of our citizens are our first priorities as European Union. By facilitating military mobility within the EU, we can be more effective in preventing crises, more efficient in deploying our missions, and quicker in reacting when challenges arise. It will be another step in deepening our cooperation at EU level, also in the framework of the Permanent Structured Cooperation we have formally launched recently, and with our partners, starting with NATO. For us, as EU, cooperation remains the only way to be effective in today's world."*

Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** said: *"Our objective is to make better use of our transport network, to ensure that military needs are accounted for when planning infrastructure projects. This means a more efficient use of public money and a better equipped transport network, ensuring a quick and seamless mobility across the continent. This is a matter of collective security."*

Today's Action Plan builds on the Roadmap on Military Mobility developed in the framework of the European Defence Agency. Concrete actions are proposed in the following areas:

- **Military requirements:** This is the starting point for an effective and coordinated approach to military mobility across the EU. The European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EU Military Staff will develop military requirements, which reflect the needs of the EU and its Member States, including the infrastructure needed for military mobility. The Council is invited to consider and validate those military requirements by mid-2018.
- **Transport infrastructure:** Infrastructure policy and investments offer opportunities for more synergies between civilian and military needs. By 2019, the Commission will identify the parts of the trans-European transport network suitable for military transport, including necessary upgrades of existing infrastructure (e.g. the height or the weight capacity of bridges). A priority list of projects will be drawn up. The Commission will take into account possible additional financial support

for these projects in the next multiannual financial framework.

- **Regulatory and procedural issues:** The Commission will look at options to streamline and simplify customs formalities for military operations and assess the need to align rules for the transport of dangerous goods in the military domain. In parallel, the European Defence Agency will support Member States in developing arrangements on cross-border movement permissions.

The Commission, the European External Action Service and the European Defence Agency will work in close coordination with the Member States for the effective implementation of these actions. They will be carried out in full respect of the sovereignty of Member States over their national territory and national decision-making processes. Coordination with efforts under the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the separate PESCO project on military mobility will equally be ensured. Cooperation and consultation with NATO on issues of military mobility will be further pursued in the framework of the implementation of the [Joint Declaration](#) to ensure coherence and synergies.

Next steps

The Action Plan is submitted to the EU Member States for consideration and endorsement. The first actions are expected to be carried out in the coming months.

A first progress report on the implementation of this Action Plan will be presented to the Member States by summer 2019.

Background

In his [State of the Union Address of 2017](#), President Juncker stressed the imperative of creating a fully-fledged European Defence Union by 2025.

The EU is already taking necessary steps to enhancing the EU preparedness and crisis response, which requires a smooth, efficient and effective movement of military personnel and assets across the EU and beyond. This Action Plan builds on the [Communication on Improving Military Mobility in the European Union that was adopted on 10 November 2017](#).

Improving military mobility also became part of the [PESCO commitments](#), as established in December 2017, and at the project level – with a separate [PESCO project](#). It is also a major deliverable under the EU-NATO Joint Declaration.

For more information

[Action Plan for Military Mobility](#)

[Factsheet: Military Mobility](#)

[Factsheet: Permanent Structured Cooperation](#)

[Joint EU – NATO Declaration](#)