

PRESS RELEASE

Online information tool on the European Defence Fund: all you need to know ahead of the European Summit

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Tomorrow the European Summit will welcome the launch of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and review 'progress' in other areas of Defence, and the European Parliament will discuss* the EC proposal to fund the development phase of new military capabilities with the EU budget, as part of the European Defence Fund.

The European Network Against Arms Trade calls for a proper public debate to happen and for the voices of concerned citizens and peace groups to be taken seriously. It has published an [online information tool](#) proposing a critical analysis of the European Defence Fund. It is targeted at citizens, activists, journalists and decision-makers alike; it aims to support them in making informed opinions, analysis and decisions.

The decisions that Member States and Euro-parliamentarians will take in the coming weeks and months in the field of military capabilities will not only shape the future of the EU, but they will also influence how the world is addressing and responding to environmental, societal and political challenges.

Laetitia Sédou, EU Programme Officer at ENAAT said: "What is at stake is too important to leave it to a small group of 'defence experts' that would agree on an allegedly 'testing-programme' of minor importance. The fundamental political debate keeps being postponed until the move will be a reality, until we will be told it is too late and that "we have no choice but go on with it". This is not our vision of how democracy works"

To date, the public debate has been very limited and mostly influenced by the views of the arms industry to benefit from the funding on the one hand, and by the official arguments of the EU on the other. In contrast, the voices of the peace community have been largely ignored, as well as those of a growing number of citizens that are concerned that such a proposal will merely profit arms industry economic interests and aggravate the international turmoil.

In addition to the [142,000](#) signatures of citizens worried about this use of EU funds for the military industrial sector, more than [4,000 citizens expressed their concerns on the EDIDP* legislative proposal](#) under the 'have your say' website set-up by the EC to collect citizens' voices. This is an unprecedented feedback rate level. So far, the EU has failed to respond to signatories or those that have offered feedback.

The ENAAT information tool expands on the reasons why we consider that the Defence Fund will not contribute to peace nor to jobs and growth; it provides arguments grounded on facts and research, as well as references for further analysis. The conclusion is that EU funding to the military industry for the Research & Development of new weaponry should be rejected by the Council and the European Parliament.

Bram Vranken, researcher for the Belgian peace organisation Vredesactie, added: "peace does not need more weapons, but rather an EU championing sustainable paths to peace. Resources are too limited to pretend doing both correctly at the same time; moreover this EU funding will rather increase insecurity by exacerbating the global arms race".

** the EP Security and Defence Subcommittee will debate on Thursday 14 December (9am) its draft Opinion on the proposal of European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP)*

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More information

[Support for the arms industry will not make the world a safer place](#)

[Peace groups denounce new EC initiatives favouring the arms industry and triggering global arms race](#)

[EU should give more funds to peace, not subsidise the arms industry](#)

[How the arms industry is staging a European coup](#)

[EU defence policy ready for psychiatric treatment](#)