Military mobility

2018/2156(INI) - 11/12/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 437 votes to 155, with 63 abstentions, a resolution on military mobility.

Members stressed that military mobility is a **central strategic tool** enabling the EU to pursue its security and defence interests effectively and in a complementary manner with other organisations such as NATO.

The introduction of the action plan on military mobility in the Union is part of the major objective of improving mobility in the EU, and at the same time of responding to the logistics and mobility challenges set out in the Common Security and Defence Policy. This is why the ambitious timetable in the action plan should be adhered to, both by the EU institutions and by Member States in order to ensure that the current mobility gaps are filled as soon as possible and the level of ambition in defence and security policy are achieved.

EU's role: while the achievement of military mobility in Europe depends above all on the commitment expressed by the Member States and their political will, the Union should contribute by guiding the process by setting a framework for requirements, providing funding, drafting protocols to facilitate the efficient movement of technical equipment and human resources, fostering cooperation and providing forums for an exchange of best practices, information and experiences involving both civilian and military authorities.

Stressing the importance of mobility when responding to a crisis, Members believe that an efficient military mobility policy will strengthen the EU's CSDP missions by increasing synergies between defence needs and strengthen the EU's capacity to respond to emergency situations. Humanitarian missions and natural disaster responses in the EU should also benefit from greater military mobility.

Challenges to be addressed: Members acknowledged the complex nature of the challenge, which involves, among other aspects, issues relating to infrastructure construction, common standards, transport regulations, customs, taxes and travel authorisations, and which concerns all levels of government. They called for the establishment of frameworks to bring together civilian and military actors at all levels, including NATO and its partners, to discuss relevant issues and thus ensure added value and effective coordination and implementation.

Connecting European Facility (CEF): Members welcomed the Commission's proposal to use the **Connecting European Facility** (CEF) to implement dual-use military mobility projects and the significant funds earmarked for this purpose. They see the implementation of the Action Plan as an opportunity to enable the civilian transport network to benefit from increased network capacity and to promote multimodal connections. They considered that any transport project of common interest financed by the CEF should integrate, if necessary, military mobility requirements at the conception phase with a view to optimising the use of EU funds.

Parliament pointed out the need for a **customs and fiscal regulatory framework**, in particular as regards VAT. In particular, it stressed the importance of achieving harmonised rules on permissions for cross-border movements, which constitute a major obstacle to rapid movement.

Member States should work together to maximise the effectiveness of cross-border dual use and to reduce administrative costs. In this regard, Members supported the ambition to speed up border crossing times by 2019, and – with that aim in mind – for diplomatic authorisations for land, sea and air movements to be issued within five days, and for that deadline to be even shorter for rapid reaction units.

Enhanced cooperation: the EU, its Member States and NATO are called on to **intensify their cooperation and coordination**, in particular by using funds for common projects, increasing political flexibility, formalising the EU-NATO relationship, broadening areas of cooperation and sharing information more widely, where this is in the interests of the Union's security.

Parliament strongly supported the Council's call on Member States to **develop national military mobility plans by the end of 2019** and to make their implementation a priority.