Basic information

2026/0078(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation	Procedure completed, awaiting publication in Official Journal
Programme for agile and rapid defence innovation (AGILE) **Subject** 3.40.09 Defence and arms industry 3.45.02 Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), craft industries 3.50.04 Innovation 6.10.02 Common security and defence policy (CSDP); WEU, NATO	

Key players

European Parliament

Joint committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
SEDE Security and Defence	PICULA Tonino (S&D)	23/04/2026
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	IJABS Ivars (Renew)	23/04/2026
	Shadow rapporteur LAKOS Eszter (EPP) FARSKÝ Jan (EPP) GORI Giorgio (S&D) THIONNET Pierre-Romain (PfE) RECHAGNEUX Julie (PfE) DONAZZAN Elena (ECR) DWORCZYK Michał (ECR) EROGLU Engin (Renew) LAGODINSKY Sergey (Greens/EFA) VAN LANSCHOT Reinier (Greens/EFA) BOTENGA Marc (The Left)	

Committee for budgetary assessment	Rapporteur for budgetary assessment	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union	
European Commission	**Commission DG** / **Commissioner** Defence Industry and Space / KUBILIUS Andrius
European Economic and Social Committee	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
25/03/2026	Legislative proposal published	COM(2026)0135	Summary
27/04/2026	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
25/06/2026	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
25/06/2026	Committee decision to open interinstitutional negotiations with report adopted in committee		
29/06/2026	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A10-0188/2026	Summary
06/07/2026	Committee decision to enter into interinstitutional negotiations announced in plenary (Rule 72)		
08/07/2026	Committee decision to enter into interinstitutional negotiations confirmed by plenary (Rule 72)		
02/09/2026	Approval in committee of the text agreed at 1st reading interinstitutional negotiations	PE791.888 PE791.889	
06/10/2026	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T10-0320/2026	Summary
06/10/2026	Results of vote in Parliament		
12/10/2026	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
21/10/2026	Final act signed		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2026/0078(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 59 Rules of Procedure EP 58 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 173-p3
Mandatory consultation of other institutions	European Economic and Social Committee
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed, awaiting publication in Official Journal
Committee dossier	CJ55/10/05509

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Amendments tabled in committee		PE788.873	13/05/2026	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A10-0188/2026	29/06/2026	Summary
Committee letter confirming interinstitutional agreement		PE791.888	22/07/2026	
Text agreed during interinstitutional negotiations		PE791.889	22/07/2026	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T10-0320/2026	06/10/2026	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Draft final act	00060/2026/LEX	16/10/2026	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2026)0135	25/03/2026	Summary

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	CZ_SENATE	COM(2026)0135	28/05/2026	
Contribution	PT_PARLIAMENT	COM(2026)0135	19/06/2026	
Contribution	RO_SENATE	COM(2026)0135	01/07/2026	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES1126/2026	29/04/2026	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Meetings with interest representatives published in line with the Rules of Procedure

Rapporteurs, Shadow Rapporteurs and Committee Chairs

Transparency				
Name	Role	Committee	Date	Interest representatives
IJABS Ivars	Rapporteur	ITRE	15/07/2026	EESC ESCP EUROPE
EROGLU Engin	Shadow rapporteur	SEDE	15/07/2026	MBDA
THIONNET Pierre-Romain	Shadow rapporteur	SEDE	06/05/2026	GROUPEMENT DES INDUSTRIES DE CONSTRUCTION ET ACTIVITES NAVALES Groupement des industries françaises de défense et de sécurité terrestres et aéroterrestres
PICULA Tonino	Rapporteur	SEDE	05/05/2026	Cyberagentur

Programme for agile and rapid defence innovation (AGILE)

2026/0078(COD) - 06/10/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 536 votes to 101, with 16 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Programme for agile and rapid defence innovation (AGILE).

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading by amending the Commission's proposal as follows:

Programme objectives

The proposed regulation establishes the programme for agile and rapid defence innovation for the period from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2027.

In addition to the support provided through existing EU instruments, a new programme should be established to provide **rapid, agile and targeted support to SMEs** to develop **innovative defence solutions** and ensure their rapid delivery to Member States and associated third countries, with a focus on cost-efficiency in order to meet the challenges faced by the armed forces of Member States and associated third countries, in particular those arising from the war of aggression waged by Russia against Ukraine.

The programme will thereby foster the competitiveness of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) and contribute to strengthening the Union’s defence industrial readiness, while reducing strategic dependencies on non-associated third countries across the full spectrum of defence technologies.

The programme should:

- focus on supporting the **rapid development of emerging and disruptive defence products and technologies**;

- **address the most urgent capability development needs** of Member States and associated third countries, taking into consideration the capability priorities identified in the context of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and the priority capability areas identified at Union level, as well as NATO standards and other relevant standards, with a particular focus on low-cost defence solutions.

- **accelerate the innovation cycles of emerging and disruptive defence products**, aligning their development with the urgent needs of Member States and associated third countries, while leveraging the innovation potential of the Union’s defence industry as a whole;

- **foster the uptake of such products by Member States**, associated third countries and prime contractors, supporting the scaling-up of SME-developed solutions across Europe and their integration into cross-border defence supply chains and strengthening security of supply for defence products within the Union.

Budget

The indicative financial envelope for the implementation of the programme, between 1 January 2027 and 31 December 2027, is **EUR 115 million** in current prices.

Eligible actions

Actions eligible for funding under the programme may take one or more of the following forms:

- support for the rapid development of emerging and disruptive defence products and, where appropriate, components necessary for their production;

- support for market uptake of emerging and disruptive defence products, including through support for the aggregation of demand and dedicated and iterative field testing and demonstrations with the involvement and feedback of end-users;

- support for the relocation of the establishment of an entity or of its executive management structure to the Union or to an associated third country for the effective implementation of actions, where an entity was previously established or its executive management structure was located in a non-associated third country;

- support for investment readiness, as well as activities to build and strengthen ecosystems, including support for cooperation between SMEs and European defence industrial prime contractors, system integrators and first-tier subcontractors.

The following actions will **not be eligible** for Union funding: (a) actions for the development of lethal autonomous weapons without the possibility for meaningful human control over selection and engagement decisions when carrying out strikes against humans; (b) actions related to cluster munitions.

Furthermore, actions supported by the programme should not contravene the security and defence interests of the Union and its Member States.

The programme will provide a fast-track, **four-month time-to-grant**, reinforcing AGILE's role as a nimble complement to the EU's existing defence industrial toolbox.

Sovereignty Seal

Regulation (EU) 2024/795 establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe (STEP) platform provides for the awarding of a sovereignty seal to projects that meet the minimum quality requirements set out in the programmes listed in that regulation. The Commission should award a sovereignty seal to any project contributing to the achievement of one of the STEP objectives, provided that the project has been assessed and meets the minimum quality requirements provided for in a call for proposals under the regulation concerning the establishment of the AGILE programme.

Monitoring and reporting

The Commission should regularly inform the European Parliament and the Council about the implementation of the programme. By 1 July 2028, the Commission should draw up a report evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the actions supported by the programme. That report should include information on, in particular, the level of participation of SMEs; the geographical distribution of supported entities and the thematic distribution of supported activities.

Programme for agile and rapid defence innovation (AGILE)

2026/0078(COD) - 25/03/2026 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish the Programme for Agile and Rapid Defence Innovation (AGILE).

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: in recent years, the European Union has made substantial progress in strengthening defence research and development. The European Defence Fund (EDF) is the Union’s flagship defence R&D programme and plays a central role in fostering structured, long-term and cooperative defence R&D across Europe. There is a need to enhance the EU's capacity to support rapid, high technology-readiness-level defence innovation that responds directly to the urgent capability development needs of Member States.

Despite promising defence innovations, there is a **gap between development and operational deployment**. This can slow the scaling of breakthrough solutions, limit the emergence of new defence players, and delay the translation of innovation into capabilities for armed forces. To address this specific gap, the EU Defence Industry Transformation Roadmap proposed the establishment of a programme for rapid and agile defence innovation (AGILE).

CONTENT: this proposed Regulation establishes the Programme for **agile and rapid defence innovation** (AGILE Programme) for the period from **1 January 2027 to 31 December 2027**.

The Programme aims to support the rapid innovation capacity of SMEs, including innovative start-ups and scaleups, with a view to supporting the rapid delivery of emerging and disruptive products and technologies for defence address the most recent and fast evolving challenges faced by Member States’ armed forces, in particular those stemming from Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, with a focus on cost-efficiency.

AGILE will:

- introduce a **more agile and responsive approach** to defence innovation support, tailored to the rapidly evolving needs of the EU's defence sector;

- adopt **simplified methodologies and processes**, including on governance, selection, evaluation and award procedure, and eligibility assessment, to enable faster decision-making and reduce administrative burden (both for applicants and for the Commission). This streamlined approach will facilitate swift support for innovative defence solutions;

- focus on **providing targeted support to single entities**, particularly SMEs, including innovative startups and scaleups, which are often at the forefront of innovation. This approach will not only simplify the application and funding process but also enable more direct and effective support for these key players in the defence innovation ecosystem. More specifically, AGILE will aim to operate with an unprecedented time-to-grant of just **four months** and

for technologies to reach defence forces between **1-3 years**. It will support between 20 and 30 projects, providing up to 100% funding for all eligible costs. It will also include a retroactive clause for companies to claim expenses incurred up to three months prior to the closing of the call for applications, to facilitate quick innovation.

Monitoring

The implementation of AGILE will be closely monitored throughout 2027, with a focus on its ability to deliver rapid, high-impact defence innovation. The Commission will carry out a targeted evaluation at the end of the implementation period to assess its effectiveness, efficiency and EU added value. The results and lessons learned could inform thinking on future EU defence innovation programmes within the context of the Commission's proposals for the Multiannual Financial Framework from 2028 onwards.

Budgetary implications

Given the current stage of the MFF 2021-2027, the availability of new funding sources is limited. Consequently, the financing of the Programme relies on internal reallocations within the existing MFF.

The total funding allocated to the Programme from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2027 is EUR 115 million, which will be financed entirely through redeployment of resources from existing programmes under the Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space (DG DEFIS). It creates no additional financial burden on Member States or the EU budget, and its impact is confined to a specific segment of defence stakeholders, primarily innovative SMEs, including innovative startups and scaleups.

Programme for agile and rapid defence innovation (AGILE)

2026/0078(COD) - 29/06/2026 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Security and Defence and the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted a joint report by Tonino PICULA (S&D, HR) and Ivars IJABS (Renew, LV) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Programme for agile and rapid defence innovation (AGILE).

The committee responsible recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the proposal as follows:

Subject matter

The proposed Regulation establishes the Programme for agile and rapid defence innovation for the period from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2027, and lays down its objectives and budget, forms of funding under the Programme and rules for the provision of that funding.

Objectives

The general objective of the Programme is to support the rapid innovation capacity of SMEs, including innovative start-ups and scaleups, with a view to increasing the rapid and cost-efficient delivery of emerging and disruptive products and technologies for defence that address the most recent and fast evolving challenges faced by Member States' armed forces, in particular those stemming from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The Programme should thereby foster the competitiveness of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) and contribute to strengthening the Union's defence readiness, while reducing strategic dependencies on non-associated third countries across the full defence technology stack. The Programme should also contribute to closing the capability gaps in operational capabilities of armed forces of Member States and associated countries.

The Programme has the following **specific objectives**:

- to significantly **accelerate innovation cycles of emerging and disruptive products and technologies** for defence developed across the Union by SMEs, including innovative start-ups and scale-ups, taking into account the urgent needs of Member States and associated countries identified with the assistance of the Programme Committee and tapping into the innovation potential of the Union's industry as a whole;

- to support the **scaling up of start-ups and scale-ups developing emerging and disruptive products and technologies** for defence across the Union and their integration with the supply chains of the EDTIB, thereby enhancing the resilience and security of supply for such defence products and technologies across the Union;

- to facilitate the **matchmaking between non-defence and New Defence SMEs** and established undertakings of defence supply chains, such as European defence industrial prime contractors, including in regions with less developed defence innovation ecosystems, thereby creating new cross-border supply chains and supporting a more balanced development of defence innovation capacities across the Union;

- to significantly **increase the uptake by Member States' and associated countries' armed forces of emerging and disruptive products and technologies** for defence developed by SMEs, including innovative start-ups and scaleups, thereby reinforcing the technological edge of Member States' armed forces.

Work programme

The Programme should be implemented by a work programme. The work programme and the challenges therein should take into account, where relevant, the capability priorities identified in the context of the Common Security and Defence Policy, including the Capability Development Plan and the findings and collaborative opportunities identified through the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence, as well as the views and expertise provided

by the European Defence Agency. The Commission should also take into account, where relevant, lessons learned, project pipelines and results from relevant Union defence innovation initiatives, including EUDIS, in order to ensure complementarity, avoid duplication and facilitate follow-on support for promising technologies.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Commission should monitor the implementation of the Programme and assess its effectiveness in achieving its objectives, with success assessed at portfolio level to reflect the high-risk, high-potential nature of defence innovation. It should also regularly report to the European Parliament on implementation, including work programmes, the definition of challenges, the outcome of award procedures and the allocation of EU funding, while respecting confidentiality and security requirements.

Moreover, the proposal requires the Commission to monitor the Programme's implementation and evaluate its effectiveness in meeting its objectives, with performance assessed at portfolio level due to the high-risk, high-potential nature of defence innovation. The Commission must keep the European Parliament regularly informed about implementation, including work programmes, funding decisions and allocation of Union support, while respecting confidentiality and security requirements.

An interim report is to be published by 1 July 2028, assessing the distribution of funding among SMEs, geographic and thematic coverage, concentration of funding, the effectiveness of simplified award procedures compared with the European Defence Fund, and the Programme's contribution to reducing strategic dependencies. A final evaluation will be published after completion of all Programme actions and will examine whether the Programme should be continued, adapted or expanded under the 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework.