

Defence cooperation: Council approves conclusions on the PESCO Strategic Review 2020

The Council approved conclusions on the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) Strategic Review 2020. The review **assesses the progress made** on PESCO and **provides guidance for the next phase (2021-2025)** on the overall aim, policy goals, incentives and projects.

The review highlights the need to fulfil the more binding commitments and **achieve concrete outputs** and tangible deliverables **by 2025**.

It stresses the importance of making tangible progress towards a coherent **Full Spectrum Force Package** that strengthens the EU's military ability to act. It also highlights and reaffirms key objectives such as those connected to defence investments, more systematic use of EU defence tools in national planning processes, enhancing the EU's operational effectiveness and developing the necessary capabilities.

The review highlights some incentives for giving PESCO more visibility at the political level and increasing the degree of transparency between member states on the way in which they are fulfilling their commitments, notably in the operational area.

The review also highlights a list of **26 PESCO projects** which will deliver concrete results or **reach full operational capability** before the end of 2025.

Launched in December 2017, PESCO represents a step-change in defence cooperation within the European Union. PESCO is a framework which allows willing and able EU member states to jointly develop defence capabilities, invest in shared projects, and enhance the operational readiness and contribution of their armed forces.

To date **25 EU member states** have undertaken binding commitments that form the basis of PESCO. There are currently **46 collaborative projects in various areas**: training facilities, land formation systems, maritime and air systems, cyber, and enabling joint multiple services or space projects.

The 25 member states participating in PESCO are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

On 5 November, the Council established the general conditions under which non-EU countries could exceptionally be invited to participate in individual PESCO projects, thereby paving the way for stronger and more ambitious defence cooperation with partners in the EU framework

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