



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 19.07.2021
C(2021) 5503 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Action Plan on synergies between civil, defence and space industries {COM(2021) 70 final}.

The Commission welcomes the support to the Action Plan by the Camera Deputaților and will take its opinion into consideration during the implementation of the relevant actions.

The Action Plan proved to be a timely initiative. Soon after its adoption, the European Council underlined the importance of fostering synergies between civil, defence and space industries and invited the Commission to present by October 2021 a roadmap on security and defence technologies. The Council Conclusions of May 2021 on Security and Defence welcomed the Action Plan and asked for its swift and full implementation. A study commissioned by the Security and Defence subcommittee of the European Parliament concluded that ‘it is too soon to tell whether this action plan will be a game changer, but its very existence and the direction to which it is heading are extremely positive elements’. The European Economic and Social Committee found the Action Plan ‘fundamental for fostering the integration of new digital and other emerging technologies in the defence, security and space ecosystem’.

Implementation of this Action Plan already started with a ‘whole of the EU’ approach which includes 40 Directorates-General, services or EU Agencies. Each action is led by the most relevant Commission department. The Commission will oversee this implementation, and will present a report to the European Parliament and the Council every two years.

The Commission would like to provide some more specific information for the points raised by the Camera Deputaților.

In relation to synergies and access to finance, Action 2 analyses ways to further improve coordination of EU programmes and instruments, in respect of applicable regulations, looking among other at synergies with the European Regional Development Fund and the approved national plans under the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

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In relation to professional skills and participation of women, Action 6 will propose specific measures in the first half of 2022 to address shortages of skills and encourage the participation of women in the defence and security sectors. Action 6 will also launch the dual use innovation incubator and the defence cross-border innovation networks, building on the new instruments of the European Innovation Council (EIC) and of the European Defence Fund (EDF), in full respect of the Horizon Europe and EDF provisions respectively.

In relation to flagship projects, Actions 9-11 have already launched preparatory internal work that will soon be followed by consultation with stakeholders with a view to presenting concrete proposals for possible follow-up steps on the three announced flagship projects: drone technologies, space-based global secure communications system, and space traffic management. Additional flagship projects may be proposed in the mid-term as a result of the Technology roadmaps for some of the critical technologies that will be analysed by Action 4.

In relation to standards, actions 5 will launch measures in support of interoperability, technical assistance for standardisation requests, inclusion of hybrid civil/defence standards in horizontal formations of international or European standardisation organisations etc.

In relation to addressing the challenges faced by small and medium enterprises (SMEs), Action 3 will raise awareness about new funding opportunities through existing networks, conferences and national focal points. In addition, it will launch dedicated support measures under EDF, the Space Programme, the EIC or other relevant funding instruments.

In relation to cyber, Action 7 will support the operationalisation of the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre as the Union's main instrument to pool investment in cybersecurity research, technology and industrial development and to implement relevant projects and initiatives together with the Network of National Coordination Centres. The Competence Centre will manage cybersecurity-related financial support from Horizon Europe, Digital Europe and will be open to other programmes, where appropriate.

In relation to strengthening EU's cooperation with NATO, the Commission already started exploratory talks at working level in relevant areas such as standards, emerging and disruptive technologies or innovation.

The Commission hopes that these elements address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaţilor and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Margrethe Vestager
Executive Vice-President*

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*