



Minutes of the expert groups

Brussels, 06/12/2021
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Minutes

First meeting of the Subgroup on Defence, as part of the Commission expert group on Policies & Programmes relevant to EU Space, Defence and Aeronautics Industry, Code E03775

29/11/2021, virtual via Skype

1. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public.

2. List of points discussed

a. Establishment of Subgroup on Defence

This is the first meeting of the Subgroup on Defence. The terms of reference are available on the European Commission's register of expert groups. The subgroup is set up for the purpose of supporting the work of the Space, Defence and Aeronautics Expert Group on the aerospace and defence industrial ecosystem in the framework of the EU industrial strategy.

As regards the rules of procedure, the same rules will apply for the subgroup as agreed upon in the plenary session of Space, Defence and Aeronautics expert group. The subgroup shall operate in compliance with the European Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups and shall report to the plenary session of the expert group.

b. State of the Union 2021 and Commission Work Programme 2022

The European Commission (Commission) provided a presentation on the main initiatives relevant for the expert group launched in 2021, such as the updated EU industrial strategy¹, the Action Plan on Synergies between civil, defence, and space industries², including the Observatory on Critical Technologies (OCT), as well as the launch of the European Defence Fund (EDF)³. The Commission also presented the upcoming policy initiatives, as published in

¹ [communication-industrial-strategy-update-2020_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

² [Creating synergies between the European civil, defence and space industries | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

³ [Launch of the European Defence Fund \(europa.eu\)](#)

the Commission's work programme 2022 following the 2021 State of the Union's speech⁴. Among the planned initiatives, the Commission highlighted the Defence Package, including the roadmap on security and defence technologies prepared by the Commission's Secretary General. The Defence Package will contribute to the upcoming Strategic Compass initiative of the Council.

The discussion and interventions from the expert group members highlighted:

- Expert group members welcomed the information, noting that it is not always easy to understand, to assess, and to navigate through all European Commission's initiatives, their linkages, and their significance for the industry's daily operation. The Commission will continue to communicate in order to enhance transparency;
- The Commission confirmed that it works in close collaboration with the European Defence Agency, ensuring consistency with the work undertaken by the Agency and avoiding repetition and duplications of efforts (e.g. Key Strategic Activities, and defence industry activities);
- Expert group members inquired about opportunities to provide input on upcoming initiatives. The Commission, in line with objectives of expert group and Commission's better regulation policy, welcomed inputs from the subgroup.

c. Mapping strategic dependencies: How can the European Commission and industry/stakeholders work together to tackle the challenge?

The Commission presented an overview of the state of play as regards several taskings by Council and Commission's policy documents on dependency mapping and monitoring of the Aerospace and Defence (ASD) Ecosystem. The Commission explained the need for market information and data in line with evidenced-based policy requirements to support delivering on these political taskings. The Commission highlighted the risks of lack of supportive data and called for support from the subgroup in this regard.

The discussion and interventions from the expert group members highlighted:

- Expert group members acknowledged the problem, providing feedback on specifics (e.g. definitions of turnover, criticality), as well as generics (e.g. the need for protection of such data/information). Some suggested that the Commission could also try to access required data and information via the National defence and security industry association (NDIAs);
- Expert group members pointed to sensitivity of some data and information. The Commission confirmed that is aware of the issue, but further explained that for monitoring of the ASD Ecosystem it looks mainly at aggregated data and information;
- The Commission welcomed reflections from the subgroup and suggested to come back to this topic in one of the next meetings.

d. Proposal for the Subgroup on Defence's Work Programme 2022

The Commission presented the plan for the meetings of the subgroup in 2022, with 1-2 topics to be discussed per meeting. Taking into account the Commission's priorities and group member's feedback from the recent survey, two topics were proposed: Access to finance and

⁴ [State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen \(europa.eu\)](#); [Commission work programme 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#)

Industry's lessons identified from the first EDF calls. The subgroup welcomed the proposal and underlined its importance.

3. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

No general conclusions or recommendations were adopted by the subgroup in this meeting.

4. Next steps

The Commission asked the participants to provide written inputs on the topics of this 1st subgroup meeting by CoB 17 December 2021 at DEFIS-SDA-EG@ec.europa.eu. The Commission also requested the participants to indicate their interest in becoming an industry rapporteur for the topic(s) of the next meeting. With the help of these inputs, the Commission will report back to the plenary group during the second meeting planned for early 2022.

5. Next meeting

The next meeting of the subgroup is expected to take place in February/March 2022.

6. List of registered participants to the meeting

Type-C organisation members:

AIAD
Airbus
Ariane Group
ASD
AVIO
BDSV
CiTD
CoLAB +ATLANTIC
Dassault Aviation
DLR
DSIA
FINCANTIERI
Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft
GIFAS
GMV
HisdeSAT
IABG
IdD - Portugal Defence
INDRA
ISL
Iveco
Leonardo
MTU
NAMMO AS
NAVAL group

Navantia
Nexter
NIDV
OHB
ONERA
PATRIA
PEGASUS (Partnership of a European Group of Aeronautics and Space Universities)
Piedmont Aerospace Cluster
Politechnika Warszawska
Polska Grupa Zbrojeniowa S.A.
Rheinmetall
Saab AB
SABCA
SAFRAN
SES SA
Stamtech
STT-SystemTechnik GmbH
Swedish Defence Research Agency
Sybilla Technologies Sp. z o.o.
Tecnobit-OESIA
Terma A/S
Thales
ULB
VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland

Guest experts:

Hensoldt AG
MBDA

European Commission:

DG DEFIS
JRC
SG