

# Military Mobility



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Military Mobility covers the movement of military personnel and assets from one place to another, including crossing borders by using different modes of transport. A smooth, efficient and effective movement of military personnel and assets across and beyond the European Union (EU) will enhance the EU's preparedness and response to crises. It will enable EU Member States to act faster, in line with their defence needs and responsibilities, both in the context of the Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations, and in the framework of national and multinational activities. Various national, European and international rules, procedures, regulations and directives are currently in place which impact, and potentially hamper, military mobility. A comprehensive European approach, to be also shared with relevant international entities, is therefore required to remedy potential issues in this regard and to allow for the swift movement of personnel and assets to the area where they are needed.

## A comprehensive European approach

Triggered by an initiative of The Netherlands, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Head of the European Defence Agency (EDA), Federica Mogherini, took action to place the removal of cross-border barriers firmly on the political agenda in June 2017. Based on an ambitious timeline and building on existing EDA projects, the EDA Steering Board

decided to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group (AHWG) on Cross Border Military Transport in September 2017.

The group was tasked to identify obstacles and barriers to cross-border movement and surface transit of military personnel and assets, map existing initiatives and shortfalls, identify relevant actors at EU and national level and to develop an action plan with dedicated tasks and responsibilities, including a roadmap with timelines. The expert group delivered an encompassing Roadmap in February 2018, based on which the High Representative and the European Commission built an Action Plan on Military Mobility.

In addition, the European Council invited the High Representative, the Commission and the EU Member States to advance their work on Military Mobility, both in the Permanent Structured Cooperation and in the context of EU-NATO cooperation.

## EDA's role in the implementation of the Action Plan

EDA is committed to support its Member States to harmonise military aspects in regulations and reducing the administrative burden, while involving relevant stakeholders and ensuring coherence with NATO. The Agency functions as a facilitator and an interface between all stakeholders and provides a platform to exchange views.

Its aim is to:

- Pursue Military Mobility activities as tasked by the Member States;
- Monitor progress on Military Mobility activities, projects and programmes;
- Report to the Member States on the progress made on an annual basis;
- Ensure coherence with NATO.

Member States identified the following actions for EDA to address Military Mobility:



## Legal – rules and regulations

Legal issues for the military domain range from the requirements for safe and secure transport of personnel and military equipment, including the transport of dangerous goods, to aspects of liability including environmental legislation; from the physical and legal protection of personnel to the availability and adequacy of relevant transport infrastructure. Given that the legislative framework differs within the Member States, it is difficult for the military to respond adequately. It is therefore important to examine the measures that should be taken to improve processes and procedures, in full respect of the sovereignty of Member States and in accordance with the EU Treaties and legislation.



## Customs - Harmonising the military requirements

Requests for military transport in and out of the EU are submitted to customs regulations. In this domain common standard procedures will be developed, and existing procedures and interpretations will be harmonised. This recently approved EDA programme has a strong link to the European Commission and will be executed in accordance with the European Union Customs Code.



## Cross Border Movement Permission

Cross Border Movement Permission concerns the procedures to acquire permission to cross borders and is an area where the EU Member States can work together to increase the consistency and/or the effectiveness of their procedures. This recently approved EDA programme aims to develop pre-grants for military movement.