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[Press release](#) | 21.02.2018

EU plans financial injection for bloated arms industry

Defence industry

The Greens/EFA Group today voted against plans that would see the European Union provide financial support to the European defence industry in developing weapons and other arms.

A majority of MEPs in the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) voted in favour of the EDIDP Regulation, which provides for expenditure of 500 million euros from the EU budget for 2019 and 2020. These subsidies are intended to encourage companies from different countries to cooperate in the development phase.

The Greens/EFA group had put forward a counter-proposal, which seeks greater EU cooperation without additional funds for the arms industry.

Reinhard Bütikofer, spokesperson for security policy and shadow rapporteur for the Greens/EFA Group, criticised:

"The plans proposed by the Commission and backed by the majority today will do far too little to fight the huge inefficiencies prevailing in defence procurement EU-wide. The EU arms sector certainly does not need to be propped up by resources from the EU's civil budget. Rather, we need to pool national defence spending more effectively. The EU Member States must work together to ensure that outcomes are reliable and produce shared technologies that genuinely increase Europe's security. EU governments must combine their defence spending on research, development, acquisition, training and maintenance in a comprehensive way.

"It is incomprehensible that the majority of MEPs could not back our proposals to demand a legal framework for the use of armed drones. Any future EU money for armed drones should be tied to strict compliance with international law.

"It is welcome that the majority of MEPs at least backed our initiative to exclude the promotion of the development of weapons of mass destruction, landmines, cluster munitions and future autonomous weapons systems from the EU funding programme."

Background

The EDIDP (European Defence Industry Development Programme) is an integral part of the European Defence Fund in the form of an EU regulation. While the EDIDP earmarked 500 million euros for 2019 and 2020, the successor regulation currently planned by the EU Commission is set to reach 1 billion euros per year from 2021. The trialogue negotiations on the EDIDP will begin in mid-March, should the mandate be adopted. The plenary vote could take place in June or July.

Background information on EDIDP and the Defence Fund can be found here:

<http://reinhardbuetikofer.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Facts-and-figures-European-Defence-Fund-including-EDIDP.pdf>

The Green/EFA Group's alternative proposal can be found here: <http://reinhardbuetikofer.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Alternative-EDIDP-proposal.pdf>

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Responsible MEPs



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