

Towards the “Military Schengen”, Europe accelerates on the mobility of armed forces

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The European Commission takes a significant political and strategic step towards the creation of a **“Military Schengen area”**: an area where troops, vehicles, and military equipment can move quickly and in a coordinated manner across the internal borders of the Union.

In the new **military mobility package**, presented together with the High Representative, Brussels aims to transform the European military geography, shifting the focus from the slowness of national procedures to the **operational speed** required by increasingly complex crisis scenarios.

What is the “Military Schengen”

The idea behind it is simple but radical: just as the Schengen Agreement eliminated internal border controls for citizens, the **“Military Schengen”** aims to **remove regulatory, logistical,**

and infrastructural obstacles that today slow down the movement of armed forces between Member States.

Specifically, the Commission proposes to:

- introduce for the first time **harmonized EU-level rules** for cross-border military movements;
- set certain and rapid times, with **a maximum of three days** for processing transit requests;
- simplify **customs and bureaucratic procedures** for convoys, heavy vehicles, and sensitive materials.

The declared goal is to create by **2027** a true **European military mobility space**, where vehicles and troops can move “at scale and speed” compatible with NATO and EU needs.

Logistics, infrastructure, and emergency response

The package is not limited to regulations. The Commission also addresses the physical terrain and the logistical chain on which the “Military Schengen” should rest.

Key points include:

- **Emergency framework** – The **European Military Mobility Enhanced Response System (EMERS)** is established, a strengthened response system that in case of crisis will allow **priority lanes** and accelerated procedures for the use of critical infrastructures by the armed forces, both in the EU and NATO context.
- **Dual-use infrastructures** – The main European corridors will be adapted to **dual-use standards**, capable of supporting both civilian and military traffic: bridges, railways, ports, airports must withstand heavy vehicles, armored convoys, exceptional transports.
- **Resilience and protection** – A new *resilience toolbox* will serve to protect strategic infrastructures, with attention to **cybersecurity, energy security, and operational continuity** in times of peace and crisis.
- **Pooling capabilities** – A **Solidarity Pool** is planned to share mobility capabilities among Member States and the possible creation of a **Military Mobility Digital Information System**, a common digital platform to coordinate transits, time windows, and logistical

priorities.

A new **Military Mobility Transport Group** will lead the process, supported by a strengthened TEN-T Committee, while each State will appoint a **national coordinator** for cross-border military transport.

From paper to industrial power: the transformation of European defense

The **“Military Schengen”** is accompanied by a second pillar: the **transformation of the European defense industry**. With the **EU Defence Industry Transformation Roadmap**, the Commission aims to systematically strengthen the industrial and technological fabric of the sector.

The main objectives are:

- **accelerate disruptive innovation** in the military sector;
- **strengthen European production capacity**, making the industrial base more stable and predictable;
- **network large groups, SMEs, and deep-tech startups**, fostering new synergies between defense and high technology;
- **bridge the technological gap** in key areas such as artificial intelligence, quantum systems, drones, and space capabilities.

The military mobility package and the industrial Roadmap are part of the **European Defence White Paper – Readiness 2030** and the **ReArm Europe** plan, which provides financial tools and incentives to support Member States' investments in defense capabilities.

With these initiatives, Brussels aims to integrate **logistics, infrastructures, and industrial capabilities** within a single vision: military logistics enters in a structured way into the European defense strategy and, alongside the Customs Union and the Schengen area for citizens, a new concept destined to consolidate enters the community lexicon: the **“Military Schengen”**.

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