



## Commission to invest €1.07 billion in 57 defence projects supporting European Readiness Flagships

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Following the evaluation of the 2025 calls for the European Defence Fund (EDF), the European Commission will invest **€1.07 billion in 57 new EDF projects**. These investments will support the goals set out in the [Defence Readiness Roadmap 2030](#) and provide essential funding for the EU's four major defence flagships: the European Drone Defence Initiative, the Eastern Flank Watch, the European Air Shield and the European Space Shield.

### EDF 2025 call results

The 57 projects selected under the [2025 EDF](#) cover a wide range of critical sectors, including artificial intelligence (AI), cyber defence, drones and counter-drone systems. These investments are designed to ensure the EU remains a leader in advanced defence technology.

More than 15 projects will support the four European Readiness Flagships. For example, project AETHER will develop propulsion and thermal management systems to support the Drone Defence Initiative. All flagship initiatives will also benefit from cross-cutting projects focused on sensors, digital transformation or cyber technologies.

The EU is also deepening its cooperation with the Ukrainian defence industry, supported by the [EU Defence Innovation Office](#) in Kyiv. This partnership aims to better integrate Ukraine into the European industrial base. One key initiative, Project STRATUS, will develop an AI-powered cyber defence system for drone swarms. It includes a Ukrainian subcontractor, ensuring the project benefits from direct battlefield experience.

To attract new talent, several projects focused on mass-producing affordable drone munitions will launch 'sub-calls' for start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These smaller companies can receive up to €60,000 each to integrate new innovations, helping those without previous defence experience enter the market. Ukrainian entities can also apply. The selected projects involve 634 entities from 26 EU Member States and Norway, reflecting a strong commitment to European defence cooperation. SMEs are central to this round, making up over 38% of participants and receiving more than 21% of the total funding.

In the calls, €675 million will support 32 capability development initiatives and €332 million will go to 25 research projects.

### Next steps

Following the selection of the successful proposals, the Commission will now enter into the grant agreement preparation with the consortia, with the goal of signing agreements before the end of the year.

### Background

The EDF is the EU's primary instrument to support defence research and development cooperation, with a budget of €7.3 billion for 2021-2027. It fosters collaboration among companies of all sizes and research institutions across the EU and Norway. Additionally, the EDF is driving the transformation and expansion of the EU defence ecosystem with the EU Defence Innovation Scheme (EUDIS) at its core.

The fifth round of EDF calls has attracted a record 410 proposals representing a 37% increase from last year.

## For more information

[EDF results 2025 factsheet and projects factsheets](#)

[Factsheet 2025 European Defence Fund Work Programme and calls](#)

[The European Defence Fund webpage](#)

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