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2025/0172 (COD)

Proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

on the acceleration of permit-granting for defence readiness projects

{SWD(2025) 820 final}

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

• Reasons for and objectives of the proposal

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has underscored the need for a strengthened EU-wide market for defence products, capable of supporting the defence readiness of Member States in the face of emerging security threats. The ongoing conflict has exposed vulnerabilities in the European defence landscape, highlighting the importance of a cohesive and resilient defence industrial base. A well-functioning EU defence market is essential to ensure that Member States have access to the necessary defence capabilities, technologies and products to respond effectively to current and future security challenges.

The impact of the changing geopolitical landscape on the EU defence market has been significant, with disruptions to supply chains, increased demand for defence products and a growing need for interoperable and innovative solutions. However, existing legislation impacting the EU defence market is not adapted to the current challenges, hindering the ability of Member States to respond rapidly and effectively to emerging threats. The existing framework, developed in peacetime, is often slow to respond to the urgent needs of Member States, and fails to provide the necessary incentives for investment in defence research and development, notably to facilitate defence investments of at least EUR 800bn over the next four years, as indicated in the Joint White paper on defence readiness [1].

In response to these challenges, the EU must take steps to strengthen the EU-wide market for defence products, promoting a more integrated and competitive defence industrial base. By creating a more robust, resilient EU defence market and developing the necessary infrastructure the EU can support the defence readiness of Member States, promote European strategic autonomy and contribute to a more stable and secure European security environment.

This proposal is a part of the Defence Readiness Omnibus. In addition to the simplification of existing regulation contained in the other acts, this proposal sets forward the establishment of a dedicated fast-track procedure for permit granting related to defence readiness.

• Consistency with existing policy provisions in the policy area

The proposal aims to adapt the provisions governing the EU-wide defence market to the current security scenario, by introducing targeted adjustments that simplify administrative procedures, cut red tape and provide more flexible solutions. By streamlining procedures and reducing bureaucratic obstacles, the proposal seeks to create a more agile and responsive EU defence market, better equipped to support the defence readiness of Member States and promote the development of a competitive and innovative European defence industry.

• Consistency with other Union policies

The proposal contributes to the objectives of enhancing the EU's defence capabilities and strengthening its strategic autonomy, while also supporting the development of innovative and sustainable defence technologies. The fast-track permitting procedure established by this proposal will facilitate the rapid deployment of defence readiness projects and expected defence investments of at least EUR 800bn over the next four years, ensuring that the EU's

[1] Joint White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030, JOIN(2025) 120 final, 19 March 2025

defence industry can respond quickly to emerging security challenges and contribute to the protection of European citizens. By streamlining the permitting process, this proposal will also help to reduce administrative burdens and costs for defence companies, allowing them to focus on the delivering on the needs of the EU Member States development of cutting-edge technologies and the creation of high-skilled jobs.

The proposed measures will also contribute to the EU's resilience and strategic autonomy by ensuring the security of supply of key defence-related technologies, which is crucial for supporting the development of the EU's defence capabilities and for public order and security. By promoting the development of a strong and innovative defence industry, this proposal will help to reduce the EU's dependence on third-country suppliers and enhance its ability to respond to emerging security challenges.

The proposal is consistent with the EU policies in the fields of safety, health, environment as it does not lower standards but aims at accelerating the procedures. The proposal is without prejudice to the level of scrutiny foreseen by the applicable permit processes.

2. LEGAL BASIS, SUBSIDIARITY AND PROPORTIONALITY

• Legal basis

The legal basis for this proposal is Article 114 TFEU. The measures proposed in this regulation have as their objective to preserve the well-functioning of the internal market, particularly the EU-wide Defence Market. In view of the current geopolitical context, the EU Member States need to rapidly increase their defence readiness. To do that, investments in defence readiness will be necessary for the functioning of the EU-wide Defence Market (such as manufacturing plants, testing facilities, as well as the necessary infrastructure.). Such development projects aimed at increasing the defence readiness of Member States or the EU require several permits to be granted. A situation in which some parts of the internal market foresee a much shorter permit-granting process would result in a serious risk to the smooth operation of the internal market. This proposal ensures that the treatment of the permit-granting process for defence readiness projects is fast and harmonized throughout the Member States.

• Subsidiarity (for non-exclusive competence)

The objectives of the proposal cannot be achieved by Member States acting alone, as the problems are of a cross-border nature. The defence industry is highly integrated and interconnected, with companies operating across multiple Member States and relying on complex supply chains that transcend national borders. The proposed actions focus on areas where there is a demonstrable value added in acting at Union level due to the scale, speed and scope of the efforts needed. By establishing a fast-track permitting procedure at EU level, the proposal aims to create a level playing field for defence companies operating in the EU, ensuring that they can respond quickly and effectively ramp up defence industrial production. The EU's collective defence efforts require a coordinated approach, and the proposed mechanism will facilitate the rapid deployment of defence readiness projects.

A lack of coordination between Member States when it comes to the treatment of the permit-granting process for defence readiness projects could result in a regulatory race to the bottom or certain parts of the internal market gaining a competitive advantage. This would be undesirable as it would negatively affect the security of supply of defence products, potentially compromising the EU's ability to respond to emerging security threats. The

proposed mechanism does not influence the factual basis of the granting of the permits concerned but rather establishes a single point of contact in Member States and a more agile way of dealing with permit applications. This will enable defence companies to obtain the relevant permits more efficiently, while ensuring that the necessary environmental, health and safety standards are upheld.

- **Proportionality**

The proposal complies with the proportionality principle in that it does not go beyond the minimum required to achieve the stated objectives at the European level and which is necessary for that purpose.

In view of the unprecedented geopolitical situation, the significant threat for security of the Union and the unprecedented scale of defence in investments in the next four years, the proposed policy approach is proportionate to the scale and gravity of the problems that have been identified. The proposal is designed to strengthen the defence readiness of Member States via measures to ensure a smooth functioning the EU-wide defence market in face of the massive and urgent ramp-up of the defence production capacities.

- **Choice of the instrument**

The Commission proposes a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council. This is the most suitable legal instrument as only a Regulation, with its uniform application, binding nature and direct applicability, can provide the necessary degree of uniformity needed to facilitate the deployment of defence readiness projects.

3. RESULTS OF EX-POST EVALUATIONS, STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- **Ex-post evaluations/fitness checks of existing legislation**

N/A

- **Stakeholder consultations**

The stakeholder consultation process was comprehensive, comprising a public survey that was open until 22 April 2025, as well as a series of targeted meetings with Member States, relevant business representatives from the Union and other key stakeholders. Through this consultation process, combined with the Commission's experience in implementing the relevant legislation, key blockages and challenges within the EU regulatory environment were identified. Based on valuable input received and the Commission's expertise, the proposals outlined in this Regulation aim to address these key issues and improve the overall effectiveness of the EU regulatory framework.

- **Collection and use of expertise**

N/A

- **Impact assessment**

The European Council called in its Conclusions of 6 March 2025 called on the Commission to accelerate the "*work on all strands to decisively ramp up Europe's defence readiness within the next five years*". Furthermore, in the same conclusions the European Council expressly called on the Commission to rapidly follow up with simplification on security and defence.

Due to the urgent nature of the proposal, which is designed to support the rapid adaptation of the European defence industry to the new geopolitical environment and aid a country at war as of the beginning of 2023, it was not possible to deliver an impact assessment prior to the adoption of the Defence Readiness Omnibus. Within 3 months after the adoption of this proposal the Commission will present a Staff Working document to justify in detail this legislative action and explain its appropriateness to achieve the identified policy objectives in accordance with the relevant Better Regulation rules.

The proposal concerns limited and targeted changes of legislation. They are based on experience from implementing legislation. The changes do not have significant impact on the policy but only ensure a more efficient and effective implementation. Their targeted nature and the lack of relevant policy options make an impact assessment not necessary. However, the attached Communication looks at elements on the impact of such measures, including the analysis of results of an EU public survey undertaken in this context.

- **Regulatory fitness and simplification**

The proposal to establish a single point of contact for permit-related proceedings for the defence sector, along with a fast-track permitting procedure, is expected to have a positive impact on minimizing compliance costs for SMEs, large companies and other stakeholders in the defence sector. By establishing a single point of contact in Member States, companies will no longer need to navigate multiple authorities and administrative bodies to obtain permits, reducing the time and resources spent on administrative tasks. This simplification of administrative procedures will significantly reduce uncertainty, providing defence companies with greater certainty and predictability, allowing them to plan their defence readiness activities with more confidence.

The fast-track procedure, which presumes a permit was granted if no reply is received by the set deadline, will also accelerate the permit issuance process, enabling defence companies to start their projects sooner, reducing delays and minimizing the associated costs. This streamlined process will enhance the competitiveness of the EU defence sector, particularly for SMEs, which will be able to respond more quickly to changing market conditions and customer needs. A more efficient and predictable permit issuance process will make the EU defence sector more attractive to investors, both domestic and foreign, which could lead to increased investment and growth in the sector.

This will facilitate trade in the defence sector, particularly for SMEs, which will be able to export their products and services more easily, contributing to the growth of international trade. The establishment of a single point of contact and a fast-track procedure will also facilitate cooperation between EU defence companies and their international partners, promoting the development of joint projects and collaborations, while ensuring compliance with international agreements and proportionate requirements to minimize the administrative burden on SMEs and other stakeholders.

- **Fundamental rights**

N/A

4. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Upon request by a Member State, assistance for capacity-building in support of the establishment or the operation of a single contact point will be eligible for funding under the European Defence Industry Programme (EDIP) when adopted and within the agreed envelope

of the programme. The capacity-building support under this proposal falls within the scope of support actions under EDIP. Due to the limited budgetary implications, no legislative financial statement will be prepared.

5. OTHER ELEMENTS

- **Implementation plans and monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements**

N/A

- **Detailed explanation of the specific provisions of the proposal**

  This Regulation sets up streamlined permitting processes for defence readiness projects. All defence readiness projects will benefit from Member States designating a national competent authority acting as a single point of contact, in charge of coordination and facilitation of permitting, guiding economic operators, ensuring that information is publicly accessible and that all documents can be digitally submitted. The Regulation sets detailed timelines for permitting procedures. The proposal is consistent with Union legislation on permitting.

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THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 114 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee[2],

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure,

Whereas:

(1) The Union is facing an acute and growing threat, as underscored in the Joint White Paper on European Defence Readiness 2030[3], linked to the return of full-scale conflict in Europe. In response to this escalating challenge, it is imperative that the Union takes decisive action to bolster its defence readiness. There is urgency to ramp up European defence readiness to ensure that Europe has a strong and sufficient European defence posture by 2030 at the latest. Based on projections of gradual take-up of the instruments proposed under the ReArm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030, defence investment could reach at least EUR 800bn over the next four years. A crucial aspect of this effort is the need to ramp up the Union's defence production capacity, enabling it to respond effectively to emerging security threats. In order to achieve that goal, regulatory simplification and harmonisation are essential. By streamlining and aligning regulatory frameworks, the Union can create a more conducive environment for defence industries to operate, innovate, and produce the necessary capabilities to ensure European security and defence readiness.

(2) In this context, defence readiness should be understood as the ability of Member States to anticipate, prevent, and respond to defence related crises, as referred to in Directive 2009/81/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[4] through a proactive and coordinated approach. This includes ensuring the availability of defence industrial capacity required to acquire and maintain the necessary resources, capabilities, and infrastructure with the aim of responding effectively to such crises.

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3 Joint White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030, JOIN(2025) 120 final, 19 March 2025.

4 Directive 2009/81/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 on the coordination of procedures for the award of certain works contracts, supply contracts and service contracts by contracting authorities or entities in the fields of defence and security, and amending Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC (OJ L 216, 20.8.2009, p. 76, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2009/81/oj).

(3) Setting up or extending facilities, infrastructure and undertaking activities related to defence readiness often requires applying for several relevant permits and approvals. Existing permitting processes for assessments across various areas are often lengthy and cumbersome. Those procedures currently lack Union-wide provisions for fast-track processes specific to defence readiness activities, which impedes the ramp-up of defence production and related infrastructure in a timely manner and defence readiness activities and investments that are crucial for meeting emerging security demands.

(4) The national permit-granting process ensures that defence readiness projects are safe, secure and comply with environmental, social and other safety requirements. Union environmental law sets common conditions for the content of the national permit-granting process, thereby ensuring a high level of environmental protection and allowing for the sustainable exploitation of the Union's potential along the raw materials value chain.

(5) At the same time, the unpredictability, complexity and, often, excessive length of national permit-granting processes undermine the investment security needed for the effective strengthening of Member States defence readiness. The structure and length of a permit-granting process for relevant projects can also differ greatly between Member States. Therefore, to ensure and speed up their effective implementation, Member States should apply streamlined and predictable permit-granting processes to defence readiness projects.

(6) While certain Member States have taken or are likely to take measures to accelerate the permission-granting processes for the defence industry, this may be done in diverging ways which would result in barriers to the functioning of the internal market in the defence sector. Divergent national legislation, regarding the planning permit-granting process of defence projects have proven to become bottlenecks for European relevant defence products supply chains. To ensure the functioning of the internal market, it is necessary to establish harmonised rules for the acceleration of the permit-granting processes.

(7) While Union institutions can provide guidance and frameworks, the responsibility for authorisation and facilitating fast-track permitting processes resides primarily with Member States. Member States are best positioned to implement changes that cater to their specific administrative and regulatory landscapes.

(8) There is a pressing need to reduce the complexity and duration of permitting processes for defence readiness projects. By establishing national permitting frameworks that prioritise these projects and ensure their rapid processing, the Union aims to enhance its defence production capacity and readiness by 2030 at the latest.

(9) In order to address these challenges, the defence industry should benefit of rules proven to be effective in streamlining industrial permitting processes. Aiming to reduce permitting deadlines for defence industry activities, including construction of new plants and related infrastructure, expansion of existing facilities, establishment of testing sites, training and certifying while also building on and broadening existing applicable provisions.

(10) Complying with Union law, including for instance in relation to water, waste management, air, ecosystems, habitats, archaeological, biodiversity and birds' protection, are integral part of the permit granting procedure, also for the defence sector. Such rules are an essential safeguard to ensure negative impacts are prevented or minimised. However, to ensure that permit granting procedures for defence

readiness projects are predictable and timely, any potential to streamline the required assessments and authorisations while not lowering the level of, for instance, environmental protection, should be realised. In that regard, it should be ensured that the necessary assessments are bundled to prevent unnecessary overlap.

(11) To facilitate the efficient and timely processing of administrative permitting applications related to defence readiness activities and the scaling up of defence production, Member States need to ensure that the competent national authorities implement fast-track procedures. Those authorities should provide the most rapid legal treatment possible for such applications, thereby enabling timely responses to defence readiness needs.

(12) Establishing a single point of contact for industry applications regarding permits related to defence activities is intended to streamline communication, reduce administrative burdens and further expedite the permitting process with clear and legally binding deadlines, thereby providing efficient pathway for defence-related industrial applications. Moreover, it will provide certainty to investors by ensuring the rapid treatment of permit applications and limiting the risks to investments related to lengthy procedures.

(13) To accelerate reaching full operational capacity of the single contact points Member States should, to the extent possible, take advantage of possible complementarity with existing single contact points, for example those established under Regulation (EU) 2024/1735 of the European Parliament and of the Council[5] or Regulation (EU) 2024/1252 of the European Parliament and of the Council[6].

(14) Furthermore, Member States should provide the necessary administrative support to defence readiness projects located on their territory, to facilitate their timely and effective implementation, paying particular attention to the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises and mid-cap enterprises involved in those projects, by providing assistance regarding compliance with applicable administrative and reporting obligations, informing the public to increase acceptance of the projects and guiding project promoters through the permit-granting process.

(15) The Commission may offer capacity-building support to the single point of contact, including technical assistance, training, monitoring and evaluation, with the aim of developing and strengthening the abilities, processes and resources that the single points of contacts need to develop for the purposes of this Regulation. Such support may be requested by Member States and will fall within the scope of supporting actions under the European Defence Industry Programme [*reference to be added once EDIP is adopted]*.

(16) In order to ensure clarity about the permitting status of defence readiness projects and to limit the effectiveness of potential abusive litigation, while not undermining effective judicial review, Member States should ensure that any dispute concerning the

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5 Regulation (EU) 2024/1735 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on establishing a framework of measures for strengthening Europe's net-zero technology manufacturing ecosystem and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1724 (Text with EEA relevance) (OJ L, 2024/1735, 28.6.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1735/oj).

6 Regulation (EU) 2024/1252 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials and amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1724 and (EU) 2019/1020 (OJ L, 2024/1252, 3.5.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1252/oj).

permit-granting process for defence readiness projects is resolved in a timely manner. To that end, Member States should ensure that project promoters have access to simple dispute settlement procedures and that defence readiness projects are subject to urgent handling in all administrative, judicial and dispute resolution procedures relating to the projects to the extent that national law provides for such urgency procedures.

(17) In order to provide project promoters and other investors with the security and clarity needed to increase development of defence readiness projects, Member States should ensure that the permit-granting process related to such projects does not exceed set time limits.

(18) This Regulation is without prejudice to the obligations deriving from international law, where relevant.

(19) Since the objective of this Regulation cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can rather, by reason of the scale or effects of the action, be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on the European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality as set out in that Article, this Regulation does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve that objective,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1
Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) 'defence readiness project' means set of activities, investments and measures aimed at enhancing the defence readiness of a Member State or several Member States, including through the development of the defence industry;

(2) 'defence industry' means all undertakings engaged in the development, production, and manufacture of defence-related products as defined in Article 3(1) of Directive 2009/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[7];

(3) 'defence readiness' means the state of preparedness of a Member State or several Member States to respond to a crisis defined in Article 1, point (10) of Directive 2009/81/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[8], which relates to defence;

(4) 'middle capitalisation company' or 'mid-cap' means middle capitalisation company as defined in Article 2, point (15), of Regulation (EU) 2021/697 of the European Parliament and of the Council[9];

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7 Directive 2009/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 May 2009 simplifying terms and conditions of transfers of defence-related products within the Community (OJ L 146, 10.6.2009, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2009/43/oj).

8 Directive 2009/81/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 on the coordination of procedures for the award of certain works contracts, supply contracts and service contracts by contracting authorities or entities in the fields of defence and security, and amending Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC (OJ L 216, 20.8.2009, p. 76, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2009/81/oj).

(5) ‘small mid-cap enterprises’ means enterprises as defined in the Annex to Commission Recommendation (EU) 2025/1099[10]

(6) ‘permit-granting process’ means a process that covers all relevant permits, including permits necessary to build, expand, convert and operate defence readiness projects and all the necessary administrative steps from the acknowledgement that the application is complete to the notification of the final decision on that application by the single contact point concerned;

(7) ‘project promoter’ means any undertaking or consortium of undertakings developing a defence readiness project;

(8) ‘small and medium-sized enterprises’ or ‘SMEs’ means small and medium-sized enterprises as defined in Article 2 of the Annex to Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC[11].

Article 2
Single point of contact

1. By …[3 months after the date of entry into force of this Regulation], each Member State shall establish or designate one authority as single point of contact at the relevant administrative level.

2. The single point of contact shall be responsible for facilitating and coordinating the permit-granting process for defence readiness projects and for providing information on streamlining the administrative processes in accordance with Article 3, including information to the project promoter on when an application is considered to be completed in accordance with Article 5(6).

3. The single point of contact established or designated pursuant to paragraph 1 shall be the sole point of contact for the project promoter in the permit-granting process for a defence readiness project. It shall notify the project promoter of the final decision in that process.

4. Project promoters shall be allowed to submit any documents relevant to the permit-granting process in electronic form.

5. The competent authorities shall ensure that any relevant studies carried out, or permits or authorisations issued, for a given project are taken into account and that no duplicate studies, permits or authorisations are required, unless otherwise required under Union or national law.

6. Member States shall ensure that the single point of contact and all competent authorities responsible for any step along the permit-granting processes, including all procedural steps, have enough qualified staff and sufficient financial, technical and technological resources necessary, including, where appropriate, for up- skilling and re-skilling, for the effective performance of their tasks under this Regulation.

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9 Regulation (EU) 2021/697 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 establishing the European Defence Fund and repealing Regulation (EU) 2018/1092 (OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 149, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/697/oj).

10 Commission Recommendation (EU) 2025/1099 of 21 May 2025 on the definition of small mid-cap enterprises (OJ L, 2025/1099, 28.5.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2025/1099/oj).

11 Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (OJ L 124, 20.5.2003, p. 36, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2003/361/oj).

7. The authorities involved in the permit-granting process and other authorities concerned shall specify and make available to the single point of contact concerned, the requirements and all information requested of a project promoter before the permit-granting process commences.

8. Upon request by a Member State, the Commission may assist the authorities of that Member State with capacity building in support of implementation of this Regulation, notably in establishing or operating a single point of contact.

Article 3
Online accessibility of information

Member States shall provide public access to the following information on permit-granting processes relevant to defence readiness projects, online and in a centralised and easily accessible manner:

(a) the single points of contact referred to in Article 2(1);

(b) the permit-granting process, including information on dispute settlement concerning the permit-granting process including, where applicable, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, if such procedures are provided for by national law;

(c) financing and investment services;

(d) funding possibilities at Union or Member State level;

(e) business support services, including but not limited to corporate tax declaration, local tax laws or labour law.

Article 4
Accelerating implementation

Member States shall provide administrative support for defence readiness projects located on their territory, paying particular attention to SMEs and mid-caps, including small mid-cap enterprises, involved in those projects, including by providing:

(a) assistance regarding compliance with applicable administrative and reporting obligations;

(b) assistance to project promoters to inform the public;

(c) assistance to project promoters along the permit-granting process, in particular for SMEs and small mid-cap enterprises.

Article 5
Duration of the permit-granting process

1. The permit-granting process for defence readiness projects, including the granting of the relevant permit, shall not exceed [60] days.

2. Where a defence readiness project requires the construction of several facilities or units in one site, the project promoter and the single point of contact may agree on splitting the project into several smaller projects for the purposes of complying with the applicable time limits.

3. In exceptional cases, where the nature, complexity, location or size of the proposed defence readiness project so requires, a Member State may once extend the time limits

referred to in paragraph 1 by a maximum of 30 days before their expiry and on a case-by-case basis.

4. Where a Member State considers that the defence readiness project raises exceptional risks for the health and safety of workers or of the general population, and where additional time is necessary to establish that measures to address identifiable risks have been put in place, it may extend the time limits referred to in paragraph 1 by 60 days, within 30 days of the start of the permit-granting process.

5. In the application of paragraph 3 or 4, the single point of contact shall inform the project promoter in writing of the reasons for the extension and of the date when the final decision is expected.

6. No later than 15 days from the receipt of the permit-granting application, the single point of contact concerned shall acknowledge that the application is complete and whether this Regulation applies or, if the project promoter has not sent all the information required to process the application, request the project promoter to submit a complete application without undue delay, specifying which information is missing. If the submitted application is deemed to be incomplete for a second time, the single point of contact may, within [15] days of the second submission, make a second request for information. The single point of contact shall not request information in areas not covered in the first request for information and shall be entitled only to request further evidence to complete the identified missing information. The date of the acknowledgement of the completeness of the application from the single point of contact shall serve as the start of the permit-granting process for that application.

7. The time limits set in this Article for any of the permit-granting processes shall be without prejudice to any shorter time limits set by Member States

8. Where the single point of contact does not inform the project promoter of the outcome of the permit-granting process within the time limit set out in paragraph 1 and extended, where applicable, in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4, the permits covered by the application shall be deemed to be granted. The single point of contact shall promptly deliver written confirmation to the project promoter, indicating that the permits have been implicitly granted based on the application submitted.

Article 6
Planning

1. National, regional and local authorities responsible for preparing plans, including zoning, spatial plans and land use plans, shall include in such plans, where appropriate, provisions for the development of defence readiness activities, projects as well as the necessary infrastructure. To facilitate the development of defence readiness projects, Member States shall ensure that all relevant spatial planning data is available online in accordance with Article 3.

2. Where plans include provisions for the development of defence readiness projects, and their required infrastructure, and are subject to an assessment pursuant to Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[12] and pursuant to Article 6 of

[12] Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (OJ L 197, 21.7.2001, p. 30, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2001/42/oj).

Council Directive 92/43/EEC[13], those assessments shall be combined. Where applicable, the combined assessment shall also address the impact on potentially affected water bodies referred to in Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[14]. Where relevant, the Member States are required to assess the impacts of existing and future activities on the marine environment, including land-sea interactions, as referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council[15] those impacts shall also be covered in the combined assessment. The fact that assessments are combined pursuant to this paragraph shall not affect their content or quality. The combined assessment shall be carried out within the time limits set out in this Regulation.

Article 7

Priority status of defence readiness projects

All dispute resolution procedures, litigation, appeals and judicial remedies as well as all administrative proceedings related to defence readiness projects before any national courts, tribunals, bodies or panels, including with regard to mediation or arbitration, where they exist in national law, shall be treated as urgent if and to the extent to which national law concerning relevant permit-granting processes provides for such urgency procedures and provided that the applicable rights of defence of individuals or of local communities are respected. Project promoters of defence readiness projects shall participate in such urgency procedures, where applicable.

Article 8

Applicability of UNECE Conventions

This Regulation is without prejudice, where relevant, to the obligations under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, signed at Aarhus on 25 June 1998, and under the UNECE Convention on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context, signed at Espoo on 25 February 1991 and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, signed in Kyiv on 21 May 2003.

Article 9

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply only to permit applications for defence readiness projects submitted after that date.

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13 Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/1992/43/oj).

14 Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2000/60/oj).

15 Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning (OJ L 257, 28.8.2014, p. 135, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/89/oj).

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Strasbourg,

For the European Parliament	*For the Council*
The President	*The President*