

EARTO inputs to the European Defence Industrial Strategy (EDIS) consultation

22 December 2023

This document puts forward answers to a selection of guiding questions established by the EARTO Working Group Security and Defence Research (WGSD) in response to the European Defence Industrial Strategy Consultation (EDIS), dated 20 November 2023. It provides the requested written inputs from think tanks and academic experts.

- *How can we further promote the use of joint procurement? Is there any concrete issues that need to be addressed within the defence procurement directive in times of high tensions?*

With spin-in calls, leading to further developing innovations developed in civil (security) research in the EDF, the probability increases that successful higher TRL innovations come out of EDF, that can next be transformed into industrial projects.

- *How to jointly identify European defence infrastructures and strategic enablers to protect the EU's free and unfettered access to and freedom of action in contested domains? How to ensure that they are available at the EU level? Could they materialise into European flagship projects?*

As reflected in the CER and NIS directives, critical infrastructure protection is of key value to the EU. Extending the same logic to R&I infrastructure, it plays a crucial role in ultimately securing the EU's ability to respond to challenges in the fields of defence and civil security. NATO DIANA has established test centres to leverage R&I infrastructure to the benefit of Members and foster closer ties between RTOs and industry. Means to achieve the same goal without unnecessary duplication at EU level should be explored for defence and civil security.

- *What can we do to prepare the integration of the Ukrainian DTIB into the EDTIB?*

[Ukraine is an Associated Country under Horizon Europe](#). A similar arrangement could be discussed for EDF, with due consideration given to the benefits and risks it entails (potential leaks of sensitive information to third countries outside of the arrangement).

- *How can we improve the social recognition of the key role of the defence industry, for the resilience, security, innovation, and economy of the Union?*

As most innovations come from civil research, a strong Civil Security research program is needed, with results feeding into EDF as well. In the end, security is more than only military security (deterrence, defensive and offensive capabilities).

As outlined in the Action Plan on synergies between civil, defence and space industries and, more recently, in Issue Paper #3 ahead of the upcoming EDIS, there is an urgent need for a better exchange between DGs (DEFIS, HOME, CNECT, ECHO), between COM, EDA, NATO and ESA, between COM and MS to define priorities that should be addressed at EU and national level respectively to avoid unnecessary duplication, and between civilian and defence R&I communities to integrate civil technologies in the EDTIB and vice versa.

For example, such coordination can be achieved at the programming level for EDF and Cluster 3 as separate programmes, or at the level of EDF and Cluster 3 projects through a dedicated CSA. Spin-in calls are an important step in fostering synergies that should be strengthened going forward. More thought should be given to establishing open spin-in topics to further integrate civil technologies in the EDTIB. In a similar vein, spin-out calls (from an EDF perspective) should be

discussed with DG HOME (and other DGs, see above), MS, and the civilian R&I community. In addition, avenues for stronger synergies should be discussed with CERIS experts, including challenges to procurement and standardisation, and means to reduce entry barriers to and from defence.

In more practical terms, through R&I, means to establish shared command over civilian and defence forces in civil protection could be explored. A similar logic can be extended to Cluster 4, with calls and projects in the fields of space and materials.

Overall, the greatest benefit from increased cooperation between civilian and defence R&I can be expected at lower TRLs in fields such as CBRN protection, energy supply, detecting signs of life under rubble, and others, where both civil protection and the military can draw significant added value from stronger cooperation.

An example of fostering synergies is the innovation programme "[Support for diversification strategies of defence industry in civil security technologies \(DIVERS\)](#)" established by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. Such programmes support defence companies in expanding their client base by providing civil protection services with a valuable product adapted to their needs (as was the case of the [POBO project](#)). Further domains of shared relevance that can benefit from such an approach are, for example, secure information sharing and analysis, especially about vulnerabilities, or critical infrastructure.

Further thought should be given on de-risking investments during the industrialisation phase of EDF and Cluster 3 projects, starting with the establishment of [capability development topics in Cluster 3](#), drawing on previous experience from defence. In addition, investment in the industrialisation phase of programmes stemming from EDF and Cluster 3 should be considered to ensure continuous support from R&I to market.

Any of the above-mentioned actions can be pursued as pilots in the short term (until 2027) laying the groundwork for the upcoming MFF. One possible approach that can be pursued short term would be to, first, identify EDF, PADR and EDIDP projects with sufficiently high TRLs; second, negotiate with MS to prioritise a number of those projects and secure the required co-funding; third, invite consortia to develop ready-to-market products (might require modifying consortia) post 2025, while demonstrating added value through COM and MS funding.

EARTO WGSD experts remain at the disposal of the European Institutions to provide any further input as needed.

RTOs - Research and Technology Organisations: *From the lab to your everyday life. RTOs innovate to improve your health and well-being, your safety and security, your mobility and connectivity. RTOs' technologies cover all scientific fields. Their work ranges from basic research to new products and services development. RTOs are non-profit organisations with public missions to support society. To do so, they closely cooperate with industries, large and small, as well as a wide array of public actors.*

EARTO - European Association of Research and Technology Organisations

Founded in 1999, EARTO promotes RTOs and represents their interest in Europe. EARTO network counts over 350 RTOs in more than 20 countries. EARTO members represent 150.000 highly-skilled researchers and engineers managing a wide range of innovation infrastructures.

EARTO Working Group Security and Defence Research *is composed of 70 EU Affairs Specialists working within our membership to elaborate and to voice consolidated positions of RTOs and address them to the EC and other bodies.*

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