



EU–Türkiye Defense Cooperation: Why Now — and How Far?

Kadri Taştan, Galip Dalay, Martin Quencez, and Georgina Wright

Introduction

By Kadri Taştan

For decades, Europe's security framework has rested on NATO and, above all, US leadership. That framework is now under pressure. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has upended assumptions about lasting peace on the continent, while Donald Trump's return to the White House has reignited European concerns about the reliability of American security commitments.

In an urgent response to these developments, defense and security top the EU agenda. Member states are significantly increasing military spending, and Brussels has launched the €800 billion Re-Arm Europe initiative, an ambitious effort to strengthen Europe's defense capacity and reduce dependence on external powers. Leaders are also working to build new coalitions inside NATO through the emerging "European pillar" and outside the alliance via bilateral and multilateral frameworks such as the Franco-British initiative to provide Ukraine with security guarantees.

A central question emerges as EU moves to increase its strategic autonomy: Who fits within this new security architecture? While Norway and the United Kingdom are generally seen as natural partners, Türkiye's role remains more ambiguous. This raises a key unresolved issue about the country's position in Europe's evolving security architecture.

Türkiye is not just another partner. As a NATO member state, it occupies a strategic crossroads linking Europe, the Middle East, and the Black Sea. It has played an active role in supporting Ukraine militarily and has developed a sizable, increasingly sophisticated defense industry. But despite these strengths, Türkiye's relations with the EU remain complex and often tense. Political disagreements, normative differences, the unresolved Cyprus conflict, and enduring Greek-Turkish rivalries continue to restrict formal cooperation.

Moreover, the Türkiye-EU relationship is undergoing a deep structural shift. In the past, ties were largely shaped by shared responses to external threats and hopes of closer integration. Links today are increasingly defined by the dynamics of a multipolar global order, the declining influence of the geopolitical West, and EU's efforts to redefine its identity and role, internally and externally. Türkiye and EU are repositioning themselves in global politics, and this realignment will shape the future of their interactions.

This report does not merely describe the state of Türkiye-EU defense ties. It analyzes the impact of historical legacies, great-power competition, and shifting regional dynamics on reshaping the foundation of the relationship between the two. It probes core strategic questions: What role will Türkiye play in Europe's emerging security framework? What are the long-term costs and benefits of deeper defense cooperation? And how can this cooperation be embedded within a normative framework acceptable to both sides?

The New Geopolitics of Türkiye-Europe Relations

By Galip Dalay

The historical and geopolitical contexts of Türkiye's relationship with Europe are undergoing significant transformations. They will redefine the ties between the two.

The Historical Context

In the 19th century, Turkish-Ottoman elites used the terms Europe and the West interchangeably. In the 20th century, especially after the end of World War II, the West came to encompass both sides of the Atlantic. NATO became the embodiment of the geopolitical West, with the United States serving as the linchpin. Historically, Turkish elites viewed Europe and the West as indispensable and exceptional for their place in the world.

Europe was not seen merely a center of power. It was also viewed as an aspiration. Europe and the West represented identity and status, both of which the Ottoman Empire and, subsequently, Türkiye sought to attain and gain recognition for. The threat from the Russian Empire and, later, the Soviet Union was arguably the most critical factor that drew Türkiye and Europe closer in foreign and security policy. This geopolitical convergence also created pressure for alignment in domestic policies, pushing Türkiye to harmonize theirs with those of European states.

Two historical processes [provide evidence](#) of this: the Crimean War of 1853-1856, and the Cold War and Türkiye's entry into NATO in 1952. During the former, the Ottoman Empire, along with Britain, France, and Sardinia, fought and defeated the Russian Empire. Following the war, the Ottomans [joined](#) the Treaty of Paris, or the Concert of Europe, the continent's imperial order. During the latter, the Soviet threat pushed Türkiye, in an effort to enhance its security, to become a NATO member. In both cases, however, the driving force for action was the threat from Russia. But closer ties between Türkiye and Europe, and later the West more broadly, also confirmed the former's geopolitical identity as European and Western. Turkish elites viewed this development as one that granted the country heightened status in world affairs since the international system was perceived to be Europe- or West-centric. This, in turn, incentivized Türkiye to align its domestic politics with Europe's. In the 19th century, this alignment meant embracing constitutionalism and a universal concept of citizenship over a hierarchical, religion-based system. In the mid-20th century, it meant Türkiye's [adoption](#) of a multi-party system and, at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, in an effort to join the EU, implementing reforms to align legal, political, and democratic standards with the bloc's.

The historical context of this relationship is now evolving. In the view of Turkish political elites, the West is losing its exceptionalism in the emerging global order. They believe a multipolar world is in the offing, in which the West will be but one of several centers of power. It will, though, remain first among equals.

At the same time, the West is losing its status as a reference point for Türkiye's geopolitical identity. Two factors

account for this. The first is a perception of the West's normative and material decline in global politics. The second is the belief that Europe is unwilling or unable to be more inclusive by making Türkiye or Islam part of its identity. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, reflecting this sentiment, has [noted](#) that the EU has become a "[supranational civilization but not supra-civilizational](#)".

The geopolitical convergence between Türkiye and the West, since the outbreak of war in Ukraine, does not necessarily translate into domestic political convergence. Devoid of a normative and value framework, and driven by a transactional approach, the current geopolitically driven state of ties does not provide a strong foundation for a long-term, sustainable relationship. Türkiye-Europe relations, therefore, are already occurring in a post-accession or non-accession framework.

The Geopolitical Context

The global context of Türkiye-Europe relations is also evolving. Great-power competition is redefining the international security environment, and war and territorial conquest have returned. In the aftermath of the Cold War, economic logic primarily reshaped globalization and, in many respects, superseded geopolitical logic. Now, the reverse is occurring. Geopolitical logic is redefining economic and political relations.

The last great-power competition during the Cold War united both sides of the Atlantic and created a geopolitical West. NATO served as its institutional embodiment, providing the overarching framework for European security. US President Donald Trump's return to power, however, has transformed this dynamic. European security must now be addressed against the backdrop of great-power rivalry and sphere-of-influence geopolitics, with Russia acting as a revisionist power positioned against any European security order while the US commitment to NATO and, by extension, to European security, is at best uncertain. At worst, Washington may undermine it through action and inaction.

A new phase in Türkiye-Europe relations is consequently emerging. Four factors will redefine the new relationship: the decline of the geopolitical West, the rise of sphere-of-influence geopolitics, the future of a shared neighborhood, and Russian power and the future European security order.

The prospect of a transatlantic decoupling, or strategic divergence, is one of the most significant developments in contemporary global politics. If it materializes and persists, it could give rise to a multipolar and post-Western world. The current order is not as multipolar as some assume. Multipolarity remains more aspirational than a reality, as evidenced by the wars in Ukraine and Gaza. Washington is the key actor in both conflicts, and no other actor can replace its role. But if the decoupling continues, Türkiye will likely strive to maintain good relations with both sides while inching toward Europe in a move akin to its efforts to maintain good relations with the West and Russia while evidently edging closer to the former. The decline of the geopolitical West may lead to the emergence of a geopolitical Europe, and Ankara needs to position itself as one of this new Europe's pillars.

Türkiye and Europe should reflect together on the impact on them of sphere-of-influence geopolitics, which would herald the decline of global (or universal) norms and rules. The agency of smaller states would cede to that of regional hegemony. In addition, historically, the self-ascribed role of being protector of the Orthodox community allowed Russia to intervene in the domestic politics of other states, including that of the Ottoman Empire, and trample on

their sovereignty. Today it is ethnic Russians and Russian speakers in neighboring countries whom Moscow uses as a pretext to intervene in the domestic politics of other states or undermine their sovereignty. For Russia, sphere-of-influence geopolitics is about more than the geopolitical reconstruction of its neighborhood, or “near abroad”. It is also about the normative reconstruction of its neighborhood. Moscow would, therefore, more forcefully fend off integrating its shared neighborhood with Türkiye and Europe into European political, economic, security, and normative ecosystems. As a result of sphere-of-influence geopolitics, multi-ordering in global politics, in addition to multipolarity, would also emerge. This could further regionalize the international order, possibly endangering Europe’s global regulatory power.

The ways in which Türkiye and Europe operate and interact with each other in their shared neighborhood will have a formative impact on the future of their relationship. Both sides should adopt a broader understanding of neighborhood and the linkages among regions. In terms of Russian-European competition, the Mediterranean and Black Sea are merging into a single space. This should inform the nature and logic of cooperation between Türkiye and Europe. On the Black Sea specifically, Ankara will remain committed to its idea of keeping out extra-regional players. But despite this, cooperation is still possible on multiple crucial aspects, such as investing in capacity-building for littoral states and encouraging more cooperation among the littoral NATO member states of Türkiye, Bulgaria, and Romania. In the South, the nature of post-conflict stabilization and peacebuilding, whether in Syria or Libya, will define the future of the domestic political order of those states and, in turn, redefine their geopolitical identity and their interaction with major international powers. Türkiye and Europe need to cooperate more on this.

Türkiye and Europe also need to engage in more dialogue to align their visions on connectivity, which effectively means redefining geopolitics and supply chains, both key areas of great-power rivalry. Türkiye, for example, plays a key role in the Middle Corridor, which links China with Europe (bypassing Russia), and in the Iraq Development Road Project, which links the Indian Ocean with Europe. Increased Turkish-European cooperation on both projects would boost the security of supply chains and lessen geopolitical vulnerability to Russia.

The Next Step

The new European security order is being built against Russia and, possibly, without the United States. That requires more dialogue and cooperation between NATO’s EU and non-EU European members, namely Türkiye, Norway, and the United Kingdom. This grouping should eventually include Ukraine and Georgia. The starting point for this effort should be launching more regular and structured foreign and security policy dialogue among Türkiye, the EU, the United Kingdom, and Norway. Similarly, a coalition of willing nations, the core of which should be Türkiye, key EU states, and the United Kingdom, will likely need to address the future of Ukraine and Black Sea security. This could serve as the nucleus of the new European security architecture.

European Defense, Türkiye, and the Logic of Coalition-Building

Geopolitical events may drive Türkiye and Europe closer together.

By Martin Quencez

Coalition-building has emerged as a strategic priority for European allies. Coalitions are taking shape both within established institutions—such as the so-called “European pillar of NATO”—and through ad hoc arrangements, as exemplified by the French-British initiative to offer security commitments to Ukraine. Regardless of their institutional form, these coalitions are a response to two defining developments for European security: the reorientation of United States’ foreign policy and the consequences of the war in Ukraine. Across the continent, this evolving context has created a new sense of urgency and prompted allies to reconsider strategic relationships.

In this landscape, Türkiye’s role in European defense is increasingly consequential. Its geography alone makes it an indispensable interlocutor in all discussions of the continent’s security order. The nation’s military capabilities also offer options to European countries that are seeking to strengthen their own deterrence posture.

Nonetheless, diverging interests and domestic political dynamics will continue to limit the scope of cooperation. Recent developments in Türkiye so far have not affected its diplomatic engagement with European allies. Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan’s visit to Paris, only two weeks after the imprisonment of Istanbul mayor and opposition leader Ekrem İmamoğlu, illustrates the fact that Europe is increasingly putting aside such considerations to address its pressing security issues. Yet, the future of Türkiye’s democracy cannot be completely decoupled from this strategic dialogue.

Rather than pursue a comprehensive reset of the relationship with Türkiye, European efforts should therefore focus on a target set of policy issues. While managing expectations, this ad hoc form of cooperation should also be isolated from structural political disagreements. Among the various areas of engagement, three in particular are most pressing: security commitments to Ukraine, defense-industrial cooperation, and NATO collective defense in the post-Trump era.

Ukraine and the Security of the Black Sea

Since February 2022, Ankara has sought to balance its core interests by being pro-Ukraine without becoming anti-Russia. Türkiye’s support for the Ukrainian war effort is well documented, as is its firm opposition to Russian territorial claims over Crimea and the Donbas. At the same time, Türkiye has not only refrained from joining Western sanctions against Moscow, but European companies have, in some cases, also benefited from Ankara’s permissive policies to circumvent these sanctions, and trade between the two countries has almost [doubled](#) since the beginning of the war.

Yet, Türkiye has been a central actor in the war due to its actions in the Black Sea. Ankara's ability to enforce the Montreux Convention and prevent Russian warships from passing the Straits of Bosphorus and Dardanelles since the beginning of the invasion has greatly constrained Moscow's naval operations and helped Ukrainian defense.

As European allies explore credible security commitments to Ukraine in the event of a ceasefire, Türkiye's participation in the maritime dimension of Ukraine's future security is indispensable. Its leadership in Black Sea security, illustrated for example by its role in the tripartite demining initiative signed in January 2024 with Romania and Bulgaria, makes it a central player in any coalition tasked to monitor and guarantee the respect of a future settlement.

In practice, Türkiye's role in the maritime domain could be key in a multidimensional deterrence strategy against Russia, and could complement other commitments provided by European allies such as France and the United Kingdom on land or in the air. Such a coalition does not require heavy institutional alignment among all actors, but rather enhanced coordination among "willing and able" states primarily at the military level.

At the political level, cooperation with Türkiye would be contingent on the terms and nature of the ceasefire agreement itself, which remain undefined. For Europeans, it cannot mean outsourcing all Black-Sea-related issues to Ankara. For instance, Europeans have an interest in quickly engaging Türkiye to discuss the possible sequencing of the ceasefire and its implications for the reopening of the Straits to the Russian navy.

Mutually Beneficial Industrial Cooperation

Another key dimension of European defense cooperation with Türkiye concerns the industrial domain. Since early 2025, the European Commission has unveiled a series of new initiatives to support member states in financing their defense efforts. This notably includes a proposed €150 billion SAFE (Security Action for Europe) fund. As discussions continue over the structure and rules of these mechanisms, the question of whether and how non-EU countries such as Türkiye can participate has emerged as a complex issue.

On the one hand, there is a strong political and economic argument that EU investments should primarily support European industrial capabilities. The introduction of a "European preference" in public procurement in strategic sectors, [recommended](#) by the European Competitiveness Compass, is also mentioned in the recent EU White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030. Besides, the progress made by Turkish defense industries in key domains constitutes rising competition for European companies.

On the other hand, the geopolitical situation requires pragmatic compromises. More limited participation mechanisms, such as allowing Turkish involvement in joint procurement projects up to a defined percentage or enabling Turkish industries to operate through EU-based subsidiaries under European regulatory oversight, could help meet strategic goals while providing industrial safeguards. Existing frameworks such as the Hub for EU Defence Innovation (HEDI) and PESCO could also help in that regard.

Such cooperation is made more difficult due to its institutional nature and its entanglement with national economic interests. However, the scale of European defense efforts demands creative arrangements to build a credible industrial coalition. Excluding capable partners like Türkiye on strict political rules could be strategically short-sighted if this means failing to provide the necessary capabilities to European allies or to Ukraine.

The Future of the European Security Order

Beyond Ukraine, the most consequential issue for European engagement with Türkiye concerns the future involvement of the United States in European security. Some European leaders have voiced deep concerns over Washington's transactional approach to allies and its willingness to normalize relations with Russia. Türkiye has also expressed strong opposition to some of the US administration's ideas, most notably the possibility of recognizing Crimea as Russian territory. These questions, along with the shared interests in preserving a functioning NATO alliance, should lead to a deeper dialogue between European allies and Ankara.

The United States not only contributes indispensable military capabilities but also provides strategic leadership and political balance within the alliance. Washington has historically played a crucial role in managing intra-alliance tensions, using its influence to resolve disputes and enforce compromises. In the absence of US leadership, the risk of fragmentation will increase. While the "European Pillar of NATO" is meant to address these issues, engagement with Ankara will help preserve alliance cohesion and prevent escalating divisions.

Finally, the most sensitive aspect of the future European security order will be the future relationship with Russia. Türkiye's approach, which has tried to emphasize its role as a mediator and to maintain open economic ties, may be difficult to align with the position of European countries that view Russia as a structural and existential threat. Ankara's potential role as a host of the next phase of the negotiations could illustrate this difficult balancing act. Despite the [direct confrontation](#) of Turkish and Russian interests in a series of conflicts—from the Caucasus to Syria and Libya—reconciling the diversity of European positions with Türkiye's own diplomatic trajectory could take more time.

The Strategic Case for More EU-Türkiye Defense Cooperation

By Georgina Wright

Russia's war on Ukraine and US President's Donald Trump's return to power have accelerated debates across Europe about assuming greater responsibility for the continent's security. Military spending is on the rise, with Germany relaxing long-standing fiscal constraints to support domestic and European defense production. The United Kingdom and France are spearheading efforts to form a "coalition of the willing" to prevent further aggression in Ukraine in the event of a peace deal. Supporting Ukraine, without depleting national capabilities, has also become a strategic imperative for almost every member state.

The EU has limited lawmaking powers related to defense, but it has taken decisive steps to bolster collective capabilities. Traditionally focused on narrow civilian and military missions and military mobility, the bloc is now investing heavily in its industrial base. In March, the European Commission announced a new €800 billion plan to support Europe's defense sector. It is also looking at ways to improve procurement and joint research and innovation. (An overview of the EU's defense initiatives can be found in Annex 1.

Brussels is also seeking to deepen ties with allies and partners to bridge capability gaps and reinforce deterrence. Countries such as Canada, Norway, and Switzerland have all participated in EU defense initiatives. The EU is close to concluding a security and defense pact with the United Kingdom. But EU-Türkiye cooperation remains limited despite the latter's NATO membership, its key support for Ukraine, and its sizeable and modernizing defense sector. In an era when the EU's security is deeply intertwined with neighboring countries, ignoring Ankara could come at a strategic cost. But any significant change is unlikely since it would require overcoming significant political obstacles, including reversing some of Türkiye's democratic backsliding and resolving tensions with Cyprus and Greece. In the short term, the EU and Türkiye should pursue a more pragmatic form of engagement, built around regular high-level engagement and targeted participation in EU research and procurement when it serves both parties' interests.

Ankara's Key Position

Türkiye has proven to be an indispensable, if sometimes difficult, security actor in Europe. It has supplied Ukraine with critical military aid, including widely acclaimed Bayraktar drones, without restrictions on use. It has refrained from imposing sanctions on Russia but has voted in favor of UN resolutions condemning the Kremlin's aggression. It has played a central role in brokering the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which helped stabilize grain exports. Türkiye also invoked Article 19 of the Montreux Convention, a multilateral treaty, to close the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits to Russian warships, limiting Moscow's ability to reinforce its Black Sea fleet and signaling strategic alignment with NATO.

Beyond its geographic and diplomatic leverage, Türkiye boasts a thriving defense industry. Turkish defense firms export to several EU countries, such as Estonia, Poland, Romania, and Spain, and the sector is increasingly capable of producing NATO-standard equipment in multiple domains, from unmanned combat aerial vehicles to naval

vessels. Baykar Technologies, Türkiye's largest drone manufacturer, is acquiring Italy's Piaggio Aerospace, which will enhance the buyer's technological base, particularly in propulsion systems. Baykar also recently signed a partnership agreement with Leonardo, one of Italy's largest defense firms, for the development of unmanned aerial systems. Turkish shipbuilding firm STM's deal to supply naval vessels to Portugal marks another milestone in defense-industrial ties between Türkiye and individual EU member states.

The picture is mixed, however, on EU-Türkiye defense cooperation. The country has participated in some EU civilian and military missions, but deeper engagement in flagship EU defense initiatives, such as the European Defence Fund (EDF), the European Defence Agency (EDA), or Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), remains difficult. In particular, Türkiye's democratic backsliding and ongoing tensions with Cyprus, France, and Greece have stalled any meaningful cooperation with the EU. As a result, member states have often preferred to pursue cooperation in defense and security bilaterally or through NATO.

Outside defense, Ankara is involved in numerous EU programs, including Horizon Europe and Erasmus+. Bilateral trade in goods reached €206 billion in 2023, largely due to the EU-Türkiye customs arrangement, and bilateral trade in services reached €35 billion in 2022. This shows that selective cooperation is possible, even when political relations are fraught and trust is low.

A Practical Path Forward

A full-fledged defense agreement is unlikely, at least in the short term, but the EU and Türkiye should explore ways to improve defense cooperation. Three options are evident.

A starting point would be to restore a structured, high-level dialogue. In August 2024, a Turkish foreign minister attended the Gymnich, an informal meeting of EU counterparts, for the first time in five years. Reviving formal and informal high-level engagement would allow both sides to explore common strategic interests and restore a basis of trust.

Second, the EU and Türkiye should pursue selective and project-based cooperation when mutual interests align. Türkiye could participate in EU initiatives such as PESCO's Military Mobility project and contribute to future iterations of EDIRPA (the EU's joint defense procurement framework). Legal issues, especially concerning information-sharing safeguards and the European Court of Justice's (ECJ) role in EU defense programs, could pose challenges, but Türkiye's recent alignment of its data protection laws with the EU's GDPR, along with Ankara's acceptance of limited ECJ jurisdiction under the EU-Türkiye customs arrangement, suggests that some obstacles are surmountable. If several member states continue to oppose closer ties with Türkiye, the EU should explore ad hoc cooperation with willing member states in domains such as countering hybrid threats, maritime security, and defense-industrial cooperation.

Third, the EU should recognize the symbolic and reputational value of deeper engagement with Türkiye. For many young Turks, the EU is the last remaining bastion of democratic values. At a time when liberal values are being rejected globally, closer engagement with Türkiye could help uphold the EU's ideological appeal, not just its strategic reach.

Conclusion

The current global context, marked by the war in Ukraine, the uncertainty of a long-term US commitment to European security, and rising geopolitical fragmentation, makes Türkiye-EU cooperation strategically necessary. Political differences will not disappear overnight, but room for pragmatic collaboration exists.

By restoring dialogue, pursuing project-based engagement, and building trust through incremental steps, the EU and Türkiye can lay the groundwork for a more resilient and mutually beneficial security partnership. If successful, these efforts could also reenergize the broader relationship, creating space for progress in visa liberalization and customs union modernization, and even renewed discussions about Türkiye’s European future.

Annex 1: Main EU Defense Initiatives

Name	Aim	Participants	Is Türkiye a member state?	Third-country participation
Civilian and military operations	The EU has 21 military and civilian missions worldwide.	EU27 and non-EU countries on a case-by-case basis.	Yes	Many non-EU countries, including Türkiye, have participated in EU civilian and military missions. They must sign a Framework Participation Agreement with the EU. But their input into decision-making remains limited. They have little or no influence in the design of the mission (as they often choose to take part once the mission has been decided). Operational influence can be strong. Third countries post officers in a mission's headquarters.

Name	Aim	Participants	Is Türkiye a member state?	Third-country participation
The Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)	An EU initiative designed to enhance defense collaboration among member states. It is supposed to provide a comprehensive overview of national defense plans and identify opportunities for collaboration. It was launched in 2017 and operates under the EDA.	EU27 and some third countries	No	This exercise is limited to the EU27 and countries with which the EDA has an associate agreement. Türkiye has not signed an associate agreement.
European Defence Agency (EDA)	The EDA is an EU agency that aims to develop the EU's military capabilities and coordinate defense research and innovation within the EU. It also advises EU institutions, and sometimes EU governments, on defense matters.	EU27	No	Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, and Ukraine have special arrangements with the EDA that allows them to participate in some activities. A formal arrangement with Türkiye could be explored, though this could be difficult due to ongoing tensions with Cyprus and in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Name	Aim	Participants	Is Türkiye a member state?	Third-country participation
European Defence Fund (EDF)	The EDF is the EU Commission's financial instrument to deepen defense cooperation among member states.	EU27	No	EDF is primarily reserved for EU countries, although Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway are associated countries and participate in EDF projects under certain conditions, such as accepting the remit of the European Court of Justice (ECJ). Under a customs union arrangement, Türkiye accepts ECJ rulings on matters of EU law relating to the customs union even if Ankara may be reluctant to do so for financial and/or defense issues.
European Defence Industry Reinforcement through Common Procurement Act (EDIRPA)	EDIRPA is an EU initiative launched in 2023 aimed at strengthening the EU's defense capabilities by promoting joint procurement of defense projects among member states. It is backed by a €300 million budget for 2023-2025. EDIRPA is likely to be renewed. Successful projects must involve at least three member states.	EU27 and some third countries	Limited	Third countries can participate, but they must have an agreement with the EU that includes provisions on security and defense. They must also have adequate safeguards for sensitive defense information, which some EU countries believe Türkiye does not have in place.

Name	Aim	Participants	Is Türkiye a member state?	Third-country participation
European Peace Facility (EPF)	The EPF is an EU financial instrument established in March 2021 that enables the EU to fund security and defense initiatives under strict conditions. Its original budget of €5 billion has increased significantly since the Ukraine war.	EU27 and third countries	No	The EPF enables the EU to support some defense initiatives inside the EU and in third countries. Beneficiaries have included Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. Some third countries, such as Norway, have made voluntary contributions to the EPF. To date, Türkiye has neither contributed to nor received EPF funding.
Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)	The aim is to improve defense cooperation among European countries. Its Military Mobility project aims to facilitate the movement of defense equipment across Europe.	EU27	No	All EU countries participate in PESCO. Canada, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States participate in the PESCO mobility project. A formal arrangement with Türkiye could be explored, though it could be difficult due to ongoing tensions with Cyprus and in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Name	Aim	Participants	Is Türkiye a member state?	Third-country participation
ReArm EU	ReArm EU is an EU initiative launched in 2025 to strengthen the bloc's defense industry. It encourages member states to spend €600 billion on defense. It also encourages the EU to borrow up to €150 billion for spending on the bloc's defense industry.	EU27 countries	No	<p>This is an EU initiative reserved for member states or for countries with which the EU has signed a security treaty.</p> <p>Member states are entitled to spend funds as they wish, including on purchases from the Turkish defense industry.</p>

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