

CONTENT

The Commission Work Programme 2026, foresees a legislative file entitled 'Simplifying defence and sensitive security procurement' for Q3 2026. The Defence and Sensitive Security Procurement Directive (Directive 2009/81/EC) seeks to ensure the proper functioning of the EU defence market but has been criticised for its procedural complexity and administrative burden. The European Commission therefore proposes to simplify its provisions ahead of the full revision scheduled for 2026, in order to accelerate defence readiness by 2030. Simplification measures include raising the threshold for supply and service contracts to €900 000, thereby exempting smaller contracts from the Directive's scope and reducing costs for both Member States and industry.

The Commission also aims to foster innovation by easing procurement procedures for emerging and disruptive technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing and autonomous systems. This will be achieved by allowing direct procurement of innovative products arising from competitive research projects, introducing simplified innovation partnership procedures, and clarifying procurement rules for results funded under the European Defence Fund (Regulation (EU) 2021/697). To respond to urgent capability needs, Member States will be permitted to use negotiated procedures without prior publication for common procurement of readily available equipment, enhancing speed and efficiency.

References:

- European Commission, Commission Work Programme 2026: [Europe's Independence Moment](#), COM(2025) 870 final.
- European Commission, [Communication on the Defence Readiness Omnibus](#), COM(2025) 820 final.

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