



EUROMIL aisbl
(European Organisation of
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Concept Note

Conference on the Future of Europe and the European Defence Integration

Date: Friday, 28 January 2022
Time: 11h30 – 13h00 CET
Venue: Online – Zoom Platform

I. About EUROMIL

The European Organisation of Military Associations and Trade Unions (EUROMIL) is an umbrella organisation composed of 32 military associations and trade unions from 21 countries. It is the main Europe-wide forum for cooperation among professional military associations on issues of common concern. EUROMIL strives to secure and advance the human rights, fundamental freedoms and socio-professional interests of military personnel of all ranks in Europe and promotes the concept of "Citizen in Uniform". As such, a soldier is entitled to the same rights and obligations as any other citizen. EUROMIL particularly calls for recognition of the right of servicemen and -women to form and join trade unions and independent associations and for their inclusion in a regular social dialogue by the authorities.

II. Background

Since 2016 the European Union is aiming at closer defence cooperation between the Member States. The publication of the EU's Global Strategy and the launch of the following initiatives – the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), the European Defence Fund (EDF), the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) and the Strategic Compass - significantly contribute to the creation of the European Defence Union. Policymakers and stakeholders are discussing about the EU becoming a global actor by advancing its defence capabilities and resilience capacity, and thus being able to also better contribute to its partners.

The Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE) also gave the opportunity to the citizens to take part in the debate of defence integration in the EU. Today, the CoFoE's multilingual platform contains more than 600 ideas on the topic "EU in the world". The citizens mostly advocate in favour of closer defence cooperation through the creation of an EU initial force, the development of a European defence industry and greater intelligence sharing. Hence, the EU would be able to reach the level of its declared ambition to become strategic autonomous and be able to act alone when needed but also with partners when necessary.

III. Aim of the Event

This Panel discussion will focus on the outcome of the Citizens' Panels concerning European Defence and the recommendations that were discussed during the Conference Plenary on 21-22 January. Thus, this discussion will shed light on the citizens' recommendations for the reform of the defence sector, the importance of the EU defence tools to achieve strategic autonomy and the role of the Strategic Compass.