

European Capability Development Plan (ECDP)



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Summary: The ECDP is a mechanism to compare national military capability development, anticipate R&D and procurement, and encourage joint measures via the European Defence Agency (EDA). The ECDP is regularly updated by the EDA.

At stake: Problematic where it leads to misaligned joint programmes (eg assets designed for continental as opposed to global deployment), but in particular where they are run through the EDA rather than intergovernmentally through the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR). France and Germany have already been pushing for this to develop into a “European Semester on Defence Capabilities”, generating a major developed programme with tight EU association.

What they say: “The overall objective is to increase coherence between Member States’ defence planning and to encourage European cooperation by looking together at future operational needs and defining common EU Capability Development Priorities” - EDA

Exposure: The UK will be subject to this if it continues to be associated with the EDA.

Action: UK association with the EDA should be limited to a couple of desk officers monitoring the ECDP listings – areas of fruitful cooperation should be identified at a very early stage and moved into OCCAR, away from EU structures.

Deep dive: <https://www.eda.europa.eu/docs/default-source/eda-publications/eda-brochure-cdp>