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|--------------|-----------------|
| COMPET 763   | ECOFIN 809      |
| IND 412      | COH 115         |
| MI 628       | INDEF 124       |
| CADREFIN 289 | CULT 85         |
| FIN 873      | CYBER 289       |
| RECH 280     | JAI 819         |
| ESPACE 101   | DIGIT 163       |
| CONSOM 193   | DATAPROTECT 198 |
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| EDUC 269     | RELEX 831       |
| TELECOM 316  | COPS 347        |
| ENER 396     | UD 180          |
| ENV 724      | AUDIO 84        |
| CLIMA 328    | PROCIV 129      |
| AGRI 494     | IPCR 64         |
| TRANS 419    | MAP 127         |
| SAN 476      | FISC 220        |
| PHARM 106    | CODEC 1164      |
| BIOTECH 80   | IA 164          |
| POLMIL 237   | CSC 401         |
| POLGEN 167   |                 |

#### NOTE

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From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Council

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Subject: Regulation establishing European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), including specific programme for defence research and innovation

- *Partial general approach*

= Statement by Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland

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Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland have requested that the following statement be entered in the Council minutes.

## **Joint statement of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland**

### **Regulation establishing European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), including specific programme for defence research and innovation**

*To be attached to the **General Affairs Council** meeting minutes*

We support the objectives of the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) with the ambition to strengthen the resilience, security and competitiveness across the whole Union. At the same time, we consider that the Fund should be adequately prepared to respond to the evolving security and economic realities in the Union.

Geopolitical context, in particular Russia's full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine and persistent hybrid attacks across the Union, have demonstrated that energy and communications networks are essential components of Europe's competitiveness and security architecture. Recent incidents particularly in Member States on the Union's eastern border have also exposed vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure and supply chains, underlining the need for stronger European support for preparedness, recovery capabilities and strategic reserves. More broadly, the deteriorating security environment also affects economic resilience and competitiveness by increasing investment risks, raising financing costs and weakening growth prospects in the regions most exposed to security and military threats, as highlighted in the Commission Communication on the EU's eastern regions bordering Russia, Belarus and Ukraine (COM (2026) 82) and duly noted in the **European Council** conclusions of 19 March 2026.

Against this background, we consider it important that the ECF framework:

1. should provide for a clearer and more operational recognition of critical infrastructure;
2. should adequately reflect in the operative part of the Regulation suboptimal investment situations driven by persistent geopolitical risks, in particular in EU's eastern border regions facing structurally higher risk premia and weaker investment conditions;
3. should appropriately recognise regions exposed to long-term geopolitical pressure, including EU's eastern border regions, alongside other structurally disadvantaged territories.

In light of the above, we can support Partial General Approach for the ECF at this stage, with the clear expectation that above mentioned key elements will be duly reflected in the final compromise text.

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