

PRESS RELEASE

Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne, the first French banks to sign an agreement with the EIB to support small and medium-sized enterprises in the defence sector

Paris, 18 June 2025

- A €300 million loan from the European Investment Bank will enable the BPCE banking group, through its network made of Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne, to increase its financing to the sector.
- This operation is the first signed by the EIB with a French banking group, and the second in Europe, under the new €3 billion envelope dedicated to European SMEs active in security and defence.
- The objective is to facilitate access to financing for SMEs investing in strategic areas such as cybersecurity, surveillance, resilience and defence technologies.

This loan granted to BPCE is specifically intended to address the financing needs of French SMEs investing in cybersecurity, surveillance, resilience and new technologies related to defence.

Cédric Glorieux, Head of Products and Solutions Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne: « We are very pleased that BPCE, through its network Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne, is the first banking group in France to sign this strategic agreement with the EIB. This agreement underlines our determination to step up our support for French small and medium-sized enterprises in the defence sector. Thanks to this €300 million financing envelope, BPCE will play a key role in strengthening the competitiveness and innovation of French companies, while meeting the challenges of our country's sovereignty. »

Ambroise Fayolle, Vice-President of the EIB responsible for operations in France: « We are delighted to sign with BPCE the first agreement in France to support small and medium-sized enterprises active in the security and defence industry. To ensure the security of our continent, we must support the entire ecosystem of the defence industry, including companies present in the value chain, as they often have a significant impact on their territory in terms of innovation and employment. »

Robert de Groot, Vice-President of the EIB responsible for security and defence: « In the space of one week, two major operations have been signed between the EIB and European banking partners to support SMEs active in security and defence. Facilitating financing is a critical step toward unlocking the full potential of these companies in strengthening Europe's strategic capabilities. »

The €3 billion EIB envelope also follows the agreement between the EIB and the promotional institutions of France, Germany, Italy, Poland and Spain to explore co-financing opportunities in support of the European security and defence industry. This cooperation, announced on 6 June, aims to promote a pan-European vision in areas such as research, industrial capacity, and infrastructure.

About Groupe BPCE

Groupe BPCE is the second-largest banking group in France and the fourth-largest in the euro zone in terms of capital. Through its 100,000 staff, the group serves 35 million customers – individuals, professionals, companies, investors and local government bodies – around the world. It operates in the retail banking and insurance fields in France via its two major networks, Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne, along with Banque Palatine and Oney. It also pursues its activities worldwide with the asset & wealth management services provided by Natixis Investment Managers and the wholesale banking expertise of Natixis Corporate & Investment Banking. The Group's financial strength is recognized by four credit rating agencies with the following senior preferred LT ratings: Moody's (A1, stable outlook), Standard & Poor's (A+, stable outlook), Fitch (A+, stable outlook) and R&I (A+, stable outlook).

About the EIB

The European Investment Bank (EIB), whose shareholders are the Member States of the European Union (EU), is the EU's long-term financing institution. Across eight major priorities, we support investments that contribute to achieving the EU's key objectives. In 2024, the EIB Group, which also includes the European Investment Fund (EIF), signed nearly €89 billion in new financing in support of more than 900 high-impact projects, thereby strengthening Europe's competitiveness and security. In France, the EIB Group signed more than one hundred operations in 2024 for a total amount of €12.6 billion, which made it possible to mobilize €62 billion in investments in the real economy. Nearly 60% of the EIB Group's annual financing supports projects directly contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation. More information about the EIB Group financing for security and defence is available [here](#).

Media services can find recent high-resolution photos of our headquarters in Luxembourg [here](#).

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