2nd Autonomous Systems Community of Interest (ASCI) Conference

A European Defence Agency event in partnership with the Estonian Ministry of Defence and supported by MILREM Robotics.

DRAFT (7.0)

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Day 1 - 04 November 2025

08h30 Registrations & Welcome Coffee

09h50 **Opening Address**
Hanno Pevkur, Minister of Defence, Estonia

10h05 **Welcome Remarks**
André Denk, Chief Executive, European Defence Agency

10h20 **Keynote Speech – *European strategic outlook on autonomous systems***
Tobias Vestner, Director of the Research and Policy Advice Department, GCSP

10h40 **Keynote Speech – *European industry perspective on autonomous systems***
Kuldar Väärsi, Chief Executive Officer, Milrem Robotics

11h00 **Session 1: Fostering collaboration to streamline development and procurement processes**

Although the relevance of AS is widely acknowledged, progress remains hindered by fragmented programmes, divergent timelines, and misaligned acquisition processes. Many national initiatives operate in isolation, reducing opportunities for scalability and interoperability. This high-level session will address how to align priorities, streamline procurement, and foster joint development and deployment of AS capabilities.

Ignacio Cuartero Lorenzo, Director Concepts and Capabilities, EU Military Staff
Nathalie Guichard, Director Research, Technology & Innovation, European Defence Agency
Krastio Preslavsky, Deputy Head of Unit, Defence Industrial Programming Coordination, DG DEFIS, European Commission
Representative, Ministry of Defence, Italy *(tbc)*
Representative, ASD Europe *(tbc)*

Moderator: **Jan Joel Andersson,** Political Advisor to the Defence Minister, Sweden

12h30-14h00	Lunch and visit to mini-EXPO

14h00 **Session 2: Experimenting, developing, and training together**

Effective integration requires not only technology, but also realistic testing, co-development, and joint training. While several Member States run strong national programmes, the multinational opportunities remain underused, and a more structured EU approach could boost efficiency, interoperability, and trust. This session will examine how shared experimentation, and training can be scaled up at EU level, including options such as a "European Unmanned Unit" to support development.

Raul Rikk, Capability Development Director, MILREM Robotics

Rihards Mikelsons, Head of AS Industry Development Section, Ministry of Defence, Latvia

Marco Lotz, Business Development Manager, Quantum Systems

Dario Pedro, Chief Executive Officer, Beyond Vision

Tiago Gouveia, RAS Project Officer, Technological Experimentation Group, Portuguese Army

Representative, Ministry of Defence, Ukraine *(name tbd)*

Moderator: **Stephen O'Sullivan,** Project Officer UAS Airspace Integration, EDA

15h30-16h00	Coffee Break

16h00 **Session 3: Member States' lessons and perspectives on AS – considerations on Unmanned Units in Armed Forces**

Member States are experimenting with different approaches to integrating Unmanned Units, from embedding unmanned assets into existing units to creating dedicated structures. This session provides a platform to exchange national experiences on doctrine, force design, interoperability, and operations, while exploring the long-term role of Unmanned Units in European force structures.

Rafał Dąbrowski, Deputy Head of Managment Board, Unmanned Land Weapon Systems, Unmanned Systems Force, Poland

Magnus Frykvall, Head of Department of Development, Directorate of Strategic Policy and Plans, Armed Forces HQ, Sweden

Ivo Peets, Incoming Head of Force Transformation Command, Defence Forces, Estonia

Alexander Kravcov, Ministry of Defence, Czech Republic

Representative, Armed Forces UxS Command, Ukraine *(name tbd)*

Moderator: **Mihai Ionita,** Project Officer Land and Logistics, European Defence Agency

17h30-19h00	Networking reception

Day 2 – 05 November 2025

08h30	Registrations & Welcome Coffee

09h00 **Session 4: Evolving dynamics of modern warfare – scenario-based wargaming and lessons observed**

Modern conflicts highlight both the urgency and the challenges of deploying AS effectively. This interactive session, consisting of three parts, will allow participants to examine how to bring systems rapidly to the frontline and ensure they are employed effectively, safely, and in line with operational goals. By building on recent lessons and wargaming insights, participants will identify practical improvement areas across capability development and use.

09h00 Session context, scenario presentation and methodology
João Caetano, Project Officer UAS Programmes, European Defence Agency

09h15 **PART 1:** Scenario-based wargaming – identifying assets and gaps for current and future scenarios
João Caetano, Project Officer UAS Programmes, European Defence Agency

10h15-10h45	Coffee Break

10h45 **PART 2**: From development to deployment: delivering autonomous systems to the frontline – lessons observed, challenges and priorities for acceleration

Nataliia Kushnerska, Chief Operations Officer, Roboneers
Eugene Yakovlev, Chief Partnership Development and Investor Relations Officer, Skyeton
Representative, Armed Forces UxS Command, Ukraine *(name tbd)*

Moderator: **Luca Gargiulo,** Project Officer Aviation/Air Superiority, European Defence Agency

11h45 **PART 3**: Mobility, survivability, and tactical employment of autonomous systems at the frontline – lessons observed, challenges and priorities for change/improvement

Jakub Fojtik, Vice President of Business Development, Primoco UAV
Jakob Kirner, Senior Business Developer, ARX
Karl Liavag, Business Development Manager, Naval Surface Vessels, Kongsberg
Darek Saunders, Head of Research and Innovation Unit, Frontex

Moderator: **Martin Joesaar,** Programme Officer, EU Defence Innovation Office Kyiv, EEAS

13h00-14h15	Lunch and visit to mini-EXPO

14h15 **Session 5: "Scaling up European defence: bridging funding gaps and enabling growth for strategic assets"**

To achieve strategic autonomy, Europe must urgently scale up its innovation base by transforming promising start-ups into defence-relevant scale-ups. This session will explore how to bridge critical funding gaps, accelerate investment cycles, and enable the growth of dual-use technologies into strategic assets for European defence.

Oliver Cusworth, Senior Policy Advisor, European Investment Bank

Kateryna Mykhalko, Director General, Tech Force in UA, Ukraine

Christian Martens, Chief Executive Officer of Integrated Electronic Systems, Rheinmetall

Alexander Wolf, Head of Product Management Unmanned Systems, Diehl Defence

Maurits Korthals Altes, Chief Executive Officer, Intelic

Moderator: **Robbie Boyd,** Senior Leader, Defence Security and Resilience Bank Development Group

15h45	**Conclusions and way ahead**

Nathalie Guichard, Director Research, Technology & Innovation, European Defence Agency

16h00	End of conference