



International Forum on Advanced and digitalised Smart Textiles (IFAST 2021) Recap

The International Forum on Advanced and digitalised Smart Textiles (IFAST) took place online, **on 15 and 16 June 2021**, focusing on the development of advanced smart textiles in the European defence sector and on the foundation of a possible European future dual use programme for multifunctional smart textiles.

The event was organised within a European Defence Agency (EDA) project, “Smart textiles in defence: looking at the soldiers of the future (STILE)”, whose endpoint is a proof of concept of a multifunctional smart textile model in defence.

Initially planned to be held in Lisbon, the event was organised in an online format, due to COVID restrictions. IFAST was composed of an **Exhibition Centre**, where industries, academia and research organisations presented their products, services and projects in the areas of smart, advanced and digitalised textiles, and a **conference**, which included among other things two panels:

- **Panel 1. Foresight on advanced and digitalised smart textiles in the European defence sector.**
Smart Textiles are a new generation of materials and systems with advanced multifunctional properties which, given their ability of being integrated into uniforms and platforms, have drawn the attention of defence stakeholders. In this context, EDA has incorporated Smart Textiles into the Strategy Research Agenda (SRA) of the CapTech Materials & Structures. This panel reflected on the envisaged evolution of the smart textiles in the upcoming years and their role and potential applications within the European defence field.
- **Panel 2. Visualising a European dual use programme for multifunctional smart textiles.**
The field of Smart Textiles can be applied to both the military and civil sectors, being therefore defined as a dual use technology. This enables a wide range of potential cross-fertilising exchanges between both sectors. Due to the increasing interest toward dual use applications at European level, this panel contemplated different perspectives about developing a European dual use programme for multifunctional smart textiles, analysing the advantages and challenges of making a programme on this matter available as well as the potential roadmap that should be defined and followed to achieve its implementation.

A **book of abstracts** including the contributions from the IFAST Conference and the Exhibition Centre will be published soon.