



# SPAFID CONNECT

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Oggetto : Leonardo: signing the OCEAN2020 grant agreement

*Testo del comunicato*

Vedi allegato.

## **Leonardo: signing the OCEAN2020 grant agreement, the most strategic European Defence Fund's tender for naval surveillance technology and maritime safety**

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- **Leonardo will act as coordinator, leading a team of 42 partners from 15 European countries. The OCEAN2020 project is the result of the defence research initiative funded by the European Union under the European Defence Fund**
- **The total grant value is approximately EUR 35 million**
- **Leonardo was also selected as part of the GOSSRA project for the standardization of equipment supplied to soldiers**

**Brussels, 28 March 2018** – Leonardo announced today the signature of the grant agreement for OCEAN2020, the most important project related to the initiative to boost Europe's defence research under the European Defence Fund.

The initiative is funded by the European Union and implemented by the European Defence Agency, the latter acting as *contracting authority*, under the 'Preparatory Action on Defence Research' programme.

The signing took place at the European Commission in the presence of the European Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Elzbieta Bienkowska, and Leonardo's CEO, Alessandro Profumo.

The project - which will be funded by a grant totaling around EUR 35 million - will be led by Leonardo, which will coordinate a consortium composed of 42 partners from 15 European countries.

"OCEAN2020 will make it possible to promote technological research in a sector of great interest and relevance for Europe and for the Mediterranean area in particular, such as maritime safety," said **Alessandro Profumo, CEO of Leonardo**. "Our team has established itself in a competitive environment thanks to a technologically innovative proposal of great strategic value. This is the culmination of an intense and effective collaboration among all 42 partners of the consortium, and I would like to thank each participant for their important contributions."

Leonardo, within the scope of the same "Preparatory Action on Defense Research", was selected as part of GOSSRA project, led by Rheinmetall, which is working to standardize soldier equipment that will improve the interoperability during joint operations conducted by forces of European countries.

The signing of today's agreement further reaffirms the significant role played by Leonardo in the European security and defense initiatives. The company firmly supports the Commission's proposal, aimed at providing the European Defence Fund with a budget of EUR 1.5 billion a year

from 2021 onwards. Of this amount, up to EUR 1 billion a year will support the joint development of defence capabilities by the European Union's Member States. An amount of EUR 500 million will be earmarked for research activities, essential for the growth and competitiveness of the European defense industry.

### Notes to Editors

The **OCEAN2020** project will allow the enhancement and the integration of various types of unmanned platforms (fixed wing, rotary wing, surface and underwater) with the command and control center of the naval units, providing for the data exchange via satellite with command and control centers on the ground. The joint and cooperative use of both pilot and unmanned platforms will also be demonstrated during the project. These innovative capabilities will be used for surveillance missions and maritime interdiction.

OCEAN2020 project will involve two live demonstrations of maritime surveillance and interdiction operations, conducted by European fleets using unmanned aircraft, surface vessels and underwater systems. The first demo, scheduled to take place in the Mediterranean Sea in 2019, will be coordinated by the Italian Navy and will see Leonardo's 'Hero' and 'Solo' unmanned helicopters operate from Italian naval units alongside other European partners. The second demonstration, which will take place in 2020 in the Baltic Sea, will be coordinated by the Swedish Navy. The data collected by various systems during these two demos will be processed and sent to a prototype European command and control centre in Brussels.

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