



Objective 2025: 4.5 M Drones - Ukraine Launches Brave 1 for Industrial Collaboration.

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Ukraine has set an ambitious goal: to produce 4.5 million drones by 2025—an impressive feat that underscores the country's growing dominance in drone warfare. This goal, set exclusively by Ukrainian factories, marks a significant leap from the previous year as Ukraine continues to expand its capabilities in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

Ukraine's Growing Drone Industry

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky recently proclaimed that **Ukraine is now a "world leader in drone warfare"**. His statement is based on the remarkable progress the country has made in drone technology and their use on the front lines against Russia. Ukrainian drones, including explosive first-person view (FPV) ones, are more reliable, better built, and more resistant to radio interference than many Russian drones. This places Ukraine at the forefront of

unmanned combat aviation, which has played a crucial role in the conflict.

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Russia's Production Goals and Comparison

While Ukraine's goal to produce 4.5 million drones by 2025 is ambitious, Russia has set a slightly lower target, between 3 and 4 million drones for the same year. Despite the lower quantity, Russian production is still significant, and its drones have been effectively used in various combat zones. However, Ukrainian drones have proven to be more advanced in terms of resilience and operational efficiency.

Drones as Game Changers

The tactical advantage of drones on the battlefield cannot be underestimated. These small UAVs, costing only a few hundred dollars, have caused numerous casualties and destruction. In fact, over two-thirds of the casualties along the 800-mile front of Russia's war against Ukraine are attributed to drone attacks. The ease with which drones can be deployed makes them a force multiplier, allowing precision strikes against both personnel and vehicles.

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For Ukraine, **drones represent a crucial strategic advantage.** They are used in critical areas like the no man's land around the ruins of Chasiv Yar in eastern Ukraine, where they help monitor enemy movements and disrupt Russian operations. **Ukrainian forces deploy drones 24/7 in the region, targeting everything from infantry to armored vehicles. As a result, Russian troops have become increasingly confined to their trenches, unable to operate without facing continuous drone bombardment.**

Ukrainian Innovation and Strategic Independence

The importance of drones goes beyond their impact on the battlefield. For Ukraine, drones represent a degree of "strategic independence" from foreign partners, especially as the

geopolitical landscape remains unpredictable. Although Ukraine relies on some foreign components and funding—mainly from China for certain parts—the large-scale domestic production of drones reduces the country's dependence on external aid. This is particularly important in light of fluctuating support from nations like the United States.

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The rapid expansion of Ukraine's drone production capacity is a direct response to the geopolitical reality the country is facing. While the country has faced setbacks in other military areas due to the political moods of international partners, **the self-sufficiency offered by drones allows Ukraine to continue its defense efforts without relying too heavily on external assistance.** Even during periods of suspended American aid, Ukrainian factories have managed to maintain their production momentum, ensuring that their most effective weapons remain available.

Increasing Production: From 1 Million to 4.5 Million Drones

In 2024, Ukrainian drone manufacturers exceeded their goal of producing 1 million drones by producing 2.2 million units. With the 2025 target set at more than double that figure, Ukraine's production capabilities are clearly on the rise. The expansion of this sector is not just about increasing numbers; it's about refining technology and scaling production to meet the growing demands of modern warfare.

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The success of Ukraine's drone program is fueled by its ability to quickly adapt and innovate. From mass-producing low-cost drones to developing advanced models capable of conducting complex attacks, Ukraine's drone industry is positioning itself to dominate the future of warfare.

Looking to the Future: Italian Collaboration with Ukraine in the Drone Sector

The exponential growth of drone production in Ukraine represents a unique opportunity for the Italian defense industry. Italian companies, under the supervision of the Ministry of Defense, should forge collaboration agreements with Ukraine to support the Ukrainian war effort while acquiring the necessary know-how to make Italy self-sufficient in the drone sector. An example of this [successful international collaboration is the case of France](#), which has developed strategic partnerships with Renault for the production of military vehicles and advanced systems.

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The 100,000 euro drone, while technologically advanced, is not always more useful than a hundred 1,000 euro drones, as countries like Ukraine, France, and Germany have already understood. Faced with this scenario, Italy will have to choose whether to remain anchored to legacy models or embrace an industrial and doctrinal revolution that looks to the future of modern warfare. In this context, Italian companies could greatly benefit from collaboration with Ukraine, not only to support Ukrainian military operations but also to acquire production and technical capabilities that could enhance national defense self-sufficiency.

To make Italy competitive in the drone sector and align with European partners, concrete steps are needed, such as:

1. **A national consortium for military drones** that brings together companies like Leonardo, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and Italian universities, creating a network of expertise and resources dedicated to the research, development, and production of advanced drones.
2. **An extraordinary fund to accelerate prototypes, testing, and production**, allowing for reduced development and production times, fostering the adoption of new technologies in the defense field.
3. **A training and experimentation center dedicated to autonomous warfare**, in line with what the Ukrainian army is already doing, where Italian armed forces could train their drone operators and test new autonomous systems, thus improving the effectiveness and efficiency of field operations.

In Ukraine, the initiative **Brave1**, which **promotes the development of military technologies**, has launched the **Brave1 Club**, an ecosystem that brings together the **most developed companies in the defense sector, including those with established R&D and production capabilities**. Italian companies could benefit from becoming part of this network, accessing field tests, investment opportunities, and direct collaboration with the Ukrainian armed forces. As emphasized by Brave1, "to counter the Russian military-industrial complex, we must unite the efforts of the entire market," and creating an ecosystem of technological innovation and cooperation could be the key to success.

Italian participation in the [Brave1 Club](https://brave1.gov.ua/en/) would not only strengthen national defense capabilities but also allow Italian companies to gain support for the development of advanced solutions, thereby increasing the competitiveness of the Italian defense industry internationally. Access to resources and funding from the *Brave1 Cluster* could accelerate the path towards technological and industrial self-sufficiency, contributing to the creation of a safer future for Italy.

News link: <https://brave1.gov.ua/en/>