

European Defence Challenge VI edition



**VI EDITION
2025-2026**

Orbital Europe

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Sciences Po Lille



#EuropeanDefenceChallenge



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www.europeandefencechallenge.eu

The European Defence Challenge was established under the ASSETS+ project (2020-2023)

European Defence Challenge VI edition

The challenge: a Europe without strategic anchoring among its youth

The problem

Democratic fragmentation

European defence policies remain the preserve of institutions. Civil society, especially young people, is largely excluded from the transnational debate.

Vulnerability to hybrid threats

Disinformation, cognitive warfare, cybersecurity: young people are on the front line but lack the tools to understand and respond.

The STEM → Strategy disconnect

Aeronautics, space, cyber, AI: technical fields perceived as abstract, yet they define European sovereignty.

Our vision

Inform.

Engage.

Defend.

Reconnecting young Europeans to the continent's defence challenges, to build a shared strategic culture from the ground up to institutions.

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Orbital Europe is the mobile app for European strategic culture

Learning capsules

~3 min modules + quizzes to build a shared European defence vocabulary

Scenario-based simulations

Satellite disruptions, cyber incidents: understanding strategic trade-offs under constraint

EU Defence Map

Visual mapping of “who does what” between the EU, Member States and the NATO industry

Moderated discussion space

Future petitions, transnational exchanges based on evidence and mutual respect

+ Multilingual pathways with differentiated tracks and university partnerships for EU-wide impact **+ Specialised modules** air, sea, space, cyber, energy: translating STEM issues into strategic understanding

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Impact & roadmap - Why Orbital Europe now?

Three impact levers

1) Societal resilience

Against disinformation and manipulation: an informed youth is a strategic asset, as underlined by the EU's "Democratic Shield".

2) Democratic oversight

Understanding enables better scrutiny: an informed citizen strengthens transparency and public debate on defence objectives and resources.

3) STEM → Strategy bridge

Translating technical skills into geopolitical awareness: aeronautics, space, cyber and AI as vectors of European sovereignty.

Roadmap

Phase 1 — MVP prototype, partnerships with EUISS / Egmont / SWP / ECFR

Phase 2 — Pilot deployment across 5 European universities

Phase 3 — EU scaling — AISBL structure, funding via Erasmus+ / Digital Europe / EDF