Crosetto's Defense Reform: What Changes (and Why) in the New Armed Forces Project

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In recent months, the Ministry of Defense, led by Guido Crosetto, has set in motion a reorganization process aimed at modernizing the Italian military tool, focusing on personnel, structure, and new operational capabilities. **The most recent initiative is the launch of a Strategic Committee tasked with preparing a comprehensive Defense reform bill**, a project aimed at updating the rules and organization of the Armed Forces to the new geopolitical context.

This initiative builds on a path already opened at the end of 2025: the Council of Ministers has preliminarily approved two legislative decree drafts linked to parliamentary delegations, one on joint military health and one on the revision of the national military tool, with particular attention to recruitment and careers.

Why a reform now: geopolitical context and operational readiness

In official communications, the push for reform is linked to the changed international scenario and the need to adapt the Armed Forces to more complex threats, including hybrid and digital ones. **The mandate given to the Strategic Committee is set as technical-operational and oriented on three axes: strengthening operational capabilities, simplifying administrative processes, reorganizing structures and personnel.** In this framework, two often-mentioned priorities are also included: the possible creation of a Reserve and the development of cybersecurity capabilities.

Pragmatism, not ideology: why Crosetto is a great Minister. But it's not enough! - Copyright Photo Ministry of Defense

A two-track path: decrees already initiated and a bill in preparation

The reform moves on a double level: on one side, measures already initiated through decrees (military health and tool revision), on the other, a "framework" bill that should redesign the general structure.

On the decrees front, the first intervention concerns military health: the declared goal is to build a more coordinated joint model, capable of supporting operations and collaborating with the National Health Service in a logic of subsidiarity, without creating a parallel system. The second measure concerns the revision of the national military tool and focuses mainly on recruitment and career paths, with the idea of making role feeding more efficient and some selective and

advancement mechanisms more flexible, particularly for non-commissioned officers and fixed-term volunteers.

In parallel, the Strategic Committee will have to feed a more comprehensive proposal, in which organizational and administrative choices should be rethought organically, also including new operational needs.

Personnel: staffing, recruitment, and careers

The personnel issue is central. In the reconstructions circulated around the measures at the end of 2025, the idea of a medium-term numerical target emerges, with an overall rebalancing of staffing and greater attention to career management. **Beyond the numbers, the point is the quality and composition of skills: the need for technical and specialist figures is growing, especially in areas such as cyber, communications, advanced logistics, and interoperability with allies and partners.**

In this perspective, the reform is presented as an attempt to make the machine more effective not only by increasing or redistributing staffing but by making training and professional paths more coherent.

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Reserve and cybersecurity: towards a more "mixed" and multi-domain tool

Two words frequently return: Reserve and cybersecurity. **The Reserve recalls the hypothesis of complementing the professional component with a pool of trained and recallable personnel, useful both in case of crisis and to fill specific needs.** Cybersecurity concerns an operational domain now permanent, where attacks and interferences are not necessarily linked to a declared conflict.

Some guidance documents cited in the public debate indicate, among the hypotheses, structures dedicated to countering hybrid threats and strengthening cyber capabilities, with attention to operational continuity and the availability of adequate professionalism.

Joint military health: integration and response capability

The health chapter is one of the most concrete. The idea of a joint model aims to reduce fragmentation, simplify the chain of command, and make interventions and health support faster, especially in operational scenarios and emergencies. It is also a matter of common standards, governance, and flexible use of health personnel among different components.

The strategic-industrial context: technology and national supply chain

Another fundamental axis is the strategic-industrial one. The modernization of the military tool implies investments in technologies and capabilities (from unmanned systems to interoperability, up to digital infrastructures). In the debate on the multi-year Defense programming, the theme of support for research and development and the national sector supply chain also recurs, in a delicate balance between operational needs, budget constraints, and industrial objectives.

Brigata Sassari: The challenge of asymmetric warfare in the CBRN Exercise

The political debate: consensus, criticisms, and open points

As often happens when discussing Defense, the reform generates heated discussions. Criticisms focus mainly on objectives, costs, and general direction: some fear a change in public spending priorities and others demand more transparency on expected results. On the opposite front, the Ministry's line insists on efficiency, operational readiness, and adaptation to the international context.

What to expect in the coming months

Today, the "Crosetto reform" is mainly a process under construction. **The decrees initiated at the end of 2025 represent the first operational pieces, while the work of the Strategic Committee should translate into a broader and more organic proposal. The decisive points to follow will be: definition of the Reserve, structural strengthening of cyber capabilities, administrative simplification measures, and the balance between reform ambition and sustainability (personnel, training, resources).**