Italian Army, Procurement and Industrial Model to Reform

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For the Italian Army, **the attempt at technological modernization** risks failing not due to a lack of resources or vision, but because of **the inability to reform an outdated industrial model and supply chain**. While other armed forces sail in calmer waters thanks to international collaborations and established industrial champions, the Army faces a varied and complex spectrum of needs with procedures that favor the **status quo** rather than innovation.

The Air Force and Navy: the Protective Shadow of Giants

The **Air Force** can rely on the protective umbrella of major international programs, such as the F-35 and Eurofighter. These projects, despite their complexities, offer the Italian defense industry a well-defined role and the opportunity to maintain high quality and employment. Alignment with US or European-led programs ensures high standards and a clear path for technological development.

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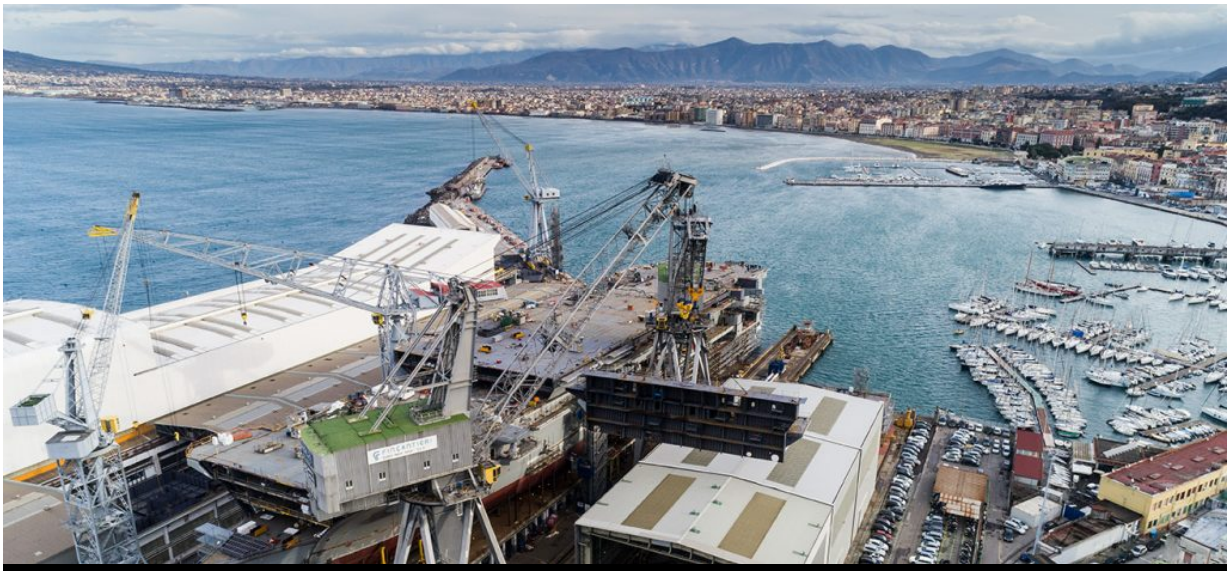
Similarly, the **Navy** benefits from the world-class position of **Fincantieri**. The ability to design and build top-level ships ensures the Armed Force access to cutting-edge weapon systems. However, the lack of real national competition can generate latent issues. Although the final products are excellent, the lack of alternatives sometimes leads to forced choices and reduces the pressure towards process optimization and innovation. These weaknesses, invisible in peacetime, could prove serious in complex operational scenarios.



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The Army: Between Complex Needs and Procedural Stalemate

The Italian Army, unlike other armed forces, has an extremely wide range of operational needs: from light infantry (Alpini, paratroopers) to heavy infantry (tanks, artillery), from anti-aircraft to

the needs of military engineering. This heterogeneity would require an agile and competitive industrial ecosystem, capable of offering specific and cutting-edge solutions. Instead, it clashes with cumbersome **procurement** procedures that tend to favor existing large companies and discourage innovative small and medium-sized enterprises.

A glaring example is the **drone sector,** particularly micro and mini drones. Worldwide, these systems are revolutionizing military doctrine, but in Italy, their industrial dawn is slow to arrive. The acquisition procedures, slow and complex, fail to keep pace with **the rapidity of technological development, and sector start-ups struggle to enter** a supply chain dominated by a few players. The result is that the Army finds itself with a significant gap in an area that will be crucial in future conflicts.

Even **command and control systems** represent a complex challenge. After years of attempts and tribulations, the **Imperio** system has represented a satisfactory solution imported from abroad. Although it marked a step forward, it still presents issues that require improvements. The need to adapt a foreign system highlights the lack of adequate national solutions.

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The Responsibility of Institutions

The real obstacle to the modernization of the Italian Army is not the lack of will or competence of its members, but a procurement system and industrial model that do not reward merit and innovation. It is in this context that the grave responsibility of the institutions emerges. Without a serious **legislative change**, aimed at simplifying procedures, encouraging competition, and rewarding excellence, every attempt at renewal is destined to remain a theoretical aspiration.

The responsibility to initiate this radical change lies with the government.

Not acting now means putting national security and the operational effectiveness of the Army at risk. If intelligent and strategic investment is not made, the Italian armed forces will be forced to operate with outdated equipment. This not only compromises the ability to defend the Nation but unacceptably increases the risks, dangers, and potential casualties among those who, as Italy's sons, are called to serve the country on the front line. Their safety and effectiveness depend on today's political and legislative choices.