



Leadership, Defense and Cooperation: Livorno Opens Its Doors to the International Naval Semester 2026

The seminar brought together Italian and foreign cadets and junior officers, opening the semester with training activities and institutional meetings.

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The Leadership Seminar, the first module of the **International Naval Semester (I.N.S.) 2026**, concluded on **29 September** at the Naval Academy in Livorno. The ceremony was attended by the Chief of Staff of the Italian Navy, squadron admiral **Giuseppe Berutti Bergotto**.

The week of activities opened the semester, bringing together Italian and international cadets and junior officers. Its aim was to establish a learning community made up of participants from different naval and military backgrounds.

The I.N.S. program focuses on international engagement, cooperation, and leadership. The first concept concerns daily interaction among different cultures; the second, working toward common goals; and the third, the skills, awareness, and meaning of command responsibility.

Before addressing technical and professional content, participants were therefore invited to reflect on their duties toward personnel, the mission, the institutions they represent, and their own country. The initial module thus provides the methodological and values-based framework for the remainder of the program.

Training between the Armed Forces and industry

This year's edition adopted a structure organized around two interconnected phases. Mornings were devoted to **thematic panels** designed to compare military and corporate cultures.

Speakers included squadron admiral **Aurelio De Carolis**, Commander in Chief of the Naval Squadron, Andrea Casaluci, CEO of Pirelli, and Domitilla Benigni, CEO of ELT Group.

Their presentations offered different perspectives on leading people and organizations in complex, rapidly changing environments. Another panel brought together the heads of officer and non-commissioned officer training institutions from the Armed Forces and the Guardia di Finanza.

The discussion focused on the impact of new strategic and technological scenarios on preparing future leaders. In the afternoon, these reflections were developed through practical activities.

Workshops led by international groups

The workshops were conducted under the guidance of **Andrea Montefusco**, a professor at LUISS Business School. With the support of experienced tutors, participants revisited the case studies presented during the morning sessions.

The groups were deliberately diverse, including both Italian and international participants. The exchange among different cultural perspectives accompanied the search for shared solutions and the application of a cooperative working method.

The activities enabled participants to practice leadership in discussions and in managing the cases presented. The program was also designed with future assignments in **multinational**

environments in mind.

The program was not confined to the classroom. Over the weekend, guided tours of **Livorno, Pisa and Florence** were organized, focusing on the area's historical and artistic heritage.

The visits provided further opportunities for participants to get to know one another. The aim was to strengthen the informal relationships on which professional trust can develop among colleagues from different navies.

Thirty-Five Countries at the Ceremony

At the opening ceremony of I.N.S. 2026, Giuseppe Berutti Bergotto was joined by the Commander of the Schools, squadron admiral **Stefano Barbieri**. The event marked both the conclusion of the seminar and the official start of the semester.

The participation of the Marina Militare leadership underscored the importance placed on international initiatives in training. The service also considers these activities a tool of naval diplomacy and preparation for future commanders.

The parade of flags represented the **35 participating countries**. Representatives of foreign navies also presented merit awards to Italian attendees who had distinguished themselves during the previous academic year.

The ceremony was also attended by **27 Naval Attachés** and **7 Consuls**. Their presence underscored the initiative's diplomatic dimension and the relations among the institutions and professional communities of the countries involved.

With the conclusion of the first module, the International Naval Semester now continues with subsequent activities. The Accademia Navale di Livorno will host a program in which leadership training and international cooperation remain central elements.

News link: <https://www.marina.difesa.it/media-cultura/Notiziario-online/Pagine/20261009-Leadership-e-cooperazione-internazionale.aspx>