# Novo Selo: NATO training that strengthens collective security on the eastern flank

Published on 23/12/2025

About **one hundred kilometers from the Black Sea**, in the Bulgarian plain, the military base of **Novo Selo** today represents **one of the main NATO training hubs on the eastern flank** of the Alliance. It is here that the daily activity of allied units concretely demonstrates **the value of training as a tool for cooperation, stability, and collective security**.

Since **October 2022**, Italy has taken on the role of **Lead Nation** of the multinational Battle Group deployed in Bulgaria. A commitment involving **740 Italian soldiers**, part of a larger force that sees **over 2,300 men and women of the Italian Army** engaged in the Atlantic Alliance missions on the eastern front. Alongside the Italian contingent, soldiers from **Bulgaria, Turkey, Romania, Albania, Greece, Montenegro, and North Macedonia** operate in a context that enhances **cooperation between different countries** and the **sharing of common procedures**.

The activity of the NATO Forward Land Forces is based on key concepts such as **vigilance, operational readiness, and interoperability**. Novo Selo is not just a military base, but **a center of training excellence**, where each exercise contributes to strengthening **the ability of allied forces to operate together effectively**.
“The training mission has four core elements: **operational readiness**, **capability integration** , **cohesion among contingents**, and **interoperability on the ground**,” explains **Colonel Mattia Scirocco**, Commander of the Multinational Battlegroup.

## Field training and operational interoperability

The training activities are divided into several phases, designed to **reproduce realistic and complex scenarios**. Under the guidance of **Lieutenant Colonel Angelo Ruggiero**, Commander of the Task Group, the training takes place **entirely on the ground**, with real means and consolidated operational procedures. This approach allows for testing **capabilities, coordination, and decision-making speed**, fundamental elements for the **readiness of the forces**.

One of the main phases is dedicated to **defensive maneuver**. In this framework, the main systems of the Italian Army come into action: the **C1 “Ariete” tank**, the **Centauro 2 armored cars**, the **VCC “Dardo” combat vehicles**, and the medium armored **“Freccia” 8x8**. The coordinated use of these vehicles allows for refining **procedures and reaction times**, also thanks to the use of **drones**, now an integral part of **modern training** and surveillance activities.

C1 “Ariete” tank - Medium armored vehicle “Freccia” 8×8, Photo Roberto Monaldo / LaPresse.

An additional training phase focuses on the **integration between allied forces**. In larger areas of the range, **communications, logistics, and maneuver coordination** are tested, with the aim of strengthening **interoperability**, one of the **fundamental pillars of NATO's operational effectiveness**.

## The infantry, continuous preparation, and collective security

The final phase of the training takes place in a **simulated urban center**, an increasingly relevant scenario in contemporary operations. Here the **infantry** assumes a central role. Together with a **Montenegrin platoon**, the Italian soldiers conduct **building clearance activities**, paying particular attention to **coordination, security, and multinational collaboration**. **Rescue operations** are also simulated, confirming the attention given to **people's protection**.

Training activities of the Italian contingent at the NATO base in Novo Selo, Bulgaria, Photo Roberto Monaldo / LaPresse.

Activities continue even as night falls. **Night training** allows for consolidating procedures and operational capabilities in different conditions, strengthening **reliability and readiness**. In this context, training is not just a technical exercise, but **a common language** that allows allied forces to operate cohesively.

At Novo Selo, day after day, **NATO's concrete contribution to collective security** takes shape. Through **continuous training**, **multinational cooperation**, and **shared standards**, the Alliance strengthens its ability to **prevent crises and ensure stability**. It is in this constant work that the **strategic importance of training and NATO's role** in the European and international context resides.

---

**News link:** https://www.agi.it/estero/news/2025-12-22/come-ci-si-addestra-fianco-est-nato-novo-selo-34763598/