Theresan Military Academy
Institute for Basic Officer Education
Burgplatz 1
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THE DEFENCE HORIZON JOURNAL

Theresan Military-Academic Forum

Call for Papers

Leaders, Algorithms, and War: Command in the Era of Autonomous Systems.

The Theresan Military Academy of the Austrian Armed Forces and the Defence Horizon Journal invite submissions for the Theresan Military Academic Forum (TMAF) 2027. The theme of TMAF 2027 is **"Leaders, Algorithms, and War: Command in the Era of Autonomous Systems."**

As military training and education evolves in response to the demands of the twenty-first century—where digitalisation, automation, and the integration of autonomous systems are reshaping the character of warfare—scientifically-grounded knowledge remains essential to strengthen operational readiness and strategic resilience. Additionally, technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) are transforming how wars are fought and raising profound questions concerning military leadership, command responsibility, ethics, decision-making, and international legal norms.

TMAF 2027 seeks contributions that critically examine how emerging technologies redefine command and leadership in contemporary and future operational environments. How should military education and officer development adapt to prepare leaders for increasingly technology-driven battlespaces? To what extent can human judgement and command authority be preserved in environments shaped by algorithmic decision-support and autonomous systems? Are Western armed forces adapting rapidly enough to maintain strategic and operational advantage, or is there a risk of falling behind more assertive adopters of these technologies?

The conference particularly welcomes interdisciplinary perspectives that bridge military science, technology, leadership studies, ethics, law, and security policy. Contributions may address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- AI and autonomous systems in military command and control
- Human-machine teaming and decision-making in combat environments
- Ethical and legal implications of the employment of autonomous weapons systems
- Officer education and leadership development in the digital age
- Cognitive warfare, information dominance, and algorithmic influence
- Military innovation and organisational adaptation
- Strategic implications of AI competition among great powers
- The future role of human leadership in increasingly automated armed forces

TMAF 2027 aims to foster informed academic and professional debate on the evolving relationship between leadership, technology, and warfare, while contributing to the advancement of military education and strategic thought within Europe and beyond.

Whilst the questions above serve as food for thought, authors are encouraged and welcome to offer original ideas and perspectives, and to engage with subject-related questions they find interesting or topical.

As busy policy professionals read The Defence Horizon Journal, all submissions should follow our guidelines for submission (https://tdhj.org/submit)

All submissions should contain endnotes following the Chicago Manual of Style. All submissions will be double peer-reviewed before publication to ensure the quality of content. This is to maintain our quality standards for our global readership.

All presenters will be promoted on social media during the event, so please include the social media handles for you and your institution (particularly X and LinkedIn) in your submission.

Submissions:

A Email your abstract of up to 250 words to tmaf@bmlv.gv.at by 23:59 (CET) **30.11.2026**. Based on the abstracts, we will compose the program for TMAF 2027. We will issue further information to the authors by 23.12.2026. Please bear in mind that we only admit in-person participation at the TMAF!

B The final draft of the manuscript must be submitted to tmaf@bmlv.gv.at by 23:59 (CET) **14.02.2027**.

The Theresan Military Academy and The Defence Horizon Journal thank you for your interest in our forum and wish you well with your submission.