DEFENCE

Research Day

12 September 2025

RMA.be Brussels
Royal Military Academy

DEFENSIE
LA DÉFENSE

LIFE DEPARTMENT, ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY
DR. ADRIANA SALATINO

DEFENCE

12 September 2025

Human-AI interaction in moral context

RMA Brussels
Royal Military Academy

LIFE Department: Performance, safety and health of soldiers
Research unit: **PEPS**, Team: **ECON**

Dr. Adriana Salatino, RMA

Arthur Prével
Université de Lille

Émilie Caspar
Ghent university

Lt. Col. Salvatore Lo Bue, RMA

Moral Decision- Making

Human-AI interaction

Responsibility

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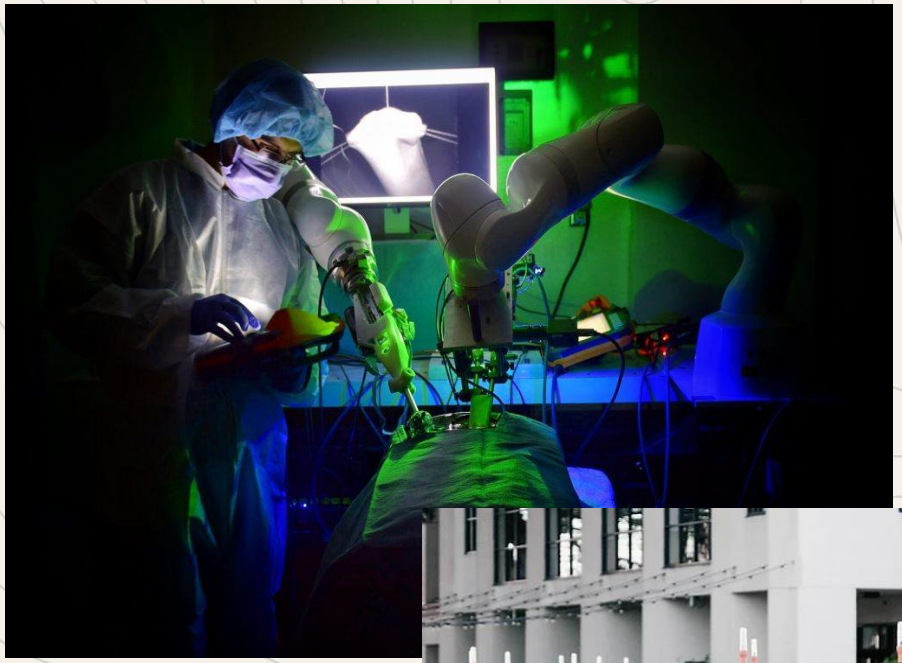
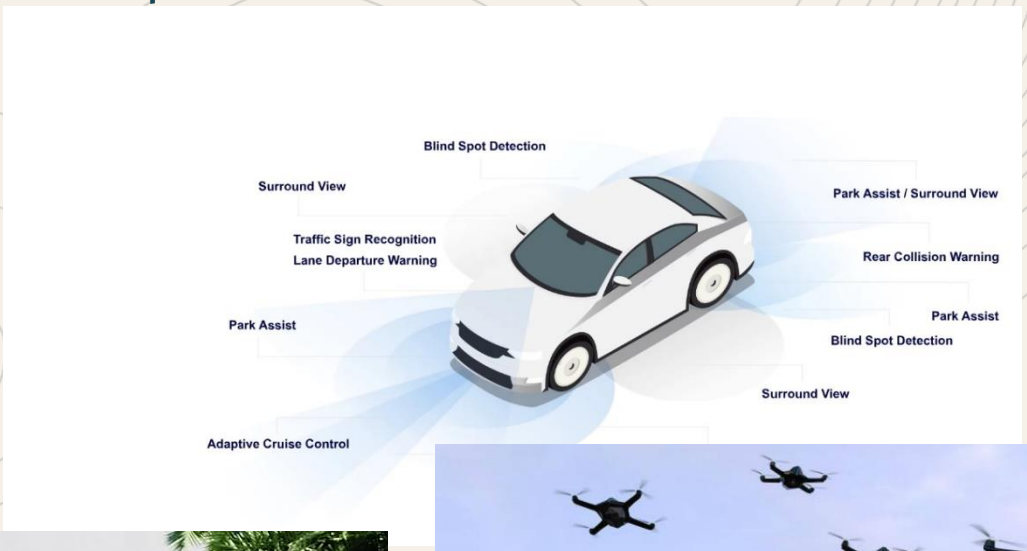
Contents

Introduction

The use of autonomous system is currently widespread in various fields of human activities:





Benefits for the users:	Negative effects:
Reduce workplace accidents [1, 2, 3]	**Overreliance on automation** [8,9]
Help demanding works [4,5]	**Loss of skills** [10]
In laboratory settings: **shorter response times, fewer errors**, and **improved multitasking** [6,7]	**Loss of Situation Awareness** [11]

[1] *Wegner, 2003;* [2] *MacMillan et al.*, 1997; [3] *Ma & Kaber*, 2007; [4] *Goh et al.*, 2005; [5] *Chavaillaz et al.*, 2018; [6] *Rovira et al., 2007;* [7] *Rice et al., 2011;* [8] *Parasuraman & Manzey, 2010;* [9] *Mosier et al., 2019;* [10] *Endsley & Kiris, 1995;* [11] *Endsley, 1988*

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Artificial Intelligence and moral decision-making

Since intelligent systems are currently being used in sensitive areas such as **medicine** and the **military**

→ impact on moral decision-making (i.e. decisions implying **conflicting moral values**)

The main focus:

Rules, algorithms and values to be assigned to systems to guide their decisions in moral situations

Until recently, not on the impact on human moral decision-making

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Mixed-picture of the effects of AI in moral decision-making

Positive effects:	Negative effects:
increase fairness between human agents [12]	more likely **to cheat** when interacting with a computer [14]
promote human cooperation [13]	detrimental in terms of **ethical decision making**

In addition, it has been shown that sense of responsibility **decrease** during the interaction with AI [15,16,17,18,19]

[12] de Melo et al., 2018; [13] Domingos et al., 2021; [14] Cohn et al., 2021; [15] Berberian, 2019; [16] Grynszpan et al, 2019; [17] Sahai et al., 2022; [18,19] Salatino et al., 2025a & 2025b

Our studies

1) AI autonomy level

Acta Psychologica 260 (2025) 105350

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Acta Psychologica

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/actpsy

"Fire! Do not fire!": Investigating the effects of autonomous sys agency and moral decision-making

Adriana Salatino [a,*], Arthur Prével [b,*], Emilie Caspar [c], Salvatore Lo Bue [a]

2) AI behaviour

www.nature.com/scientificreports

scientific reports

Check for updates

OPEN

Influence of AI behavior on human moral decisions, agency, and responsibility

Adriana Salatino[1]✉, Arthur Prével[2], Emilie Caspar[3] & Salvatore Lo Bue[1]

3) Time Pressure

Human Factors and Systems Interaction, Vol. 192, 2025, 68–75
https://doi.org/10.54941/ahfe1006629

AHFE International

The Impact of Time Constraints on Moral Decision-Making During Human-AI Interaction

Adriana Salatino[1], Arthur Prével[2], Emilie Caspar[3], and Salvatore Lo Bue[1]

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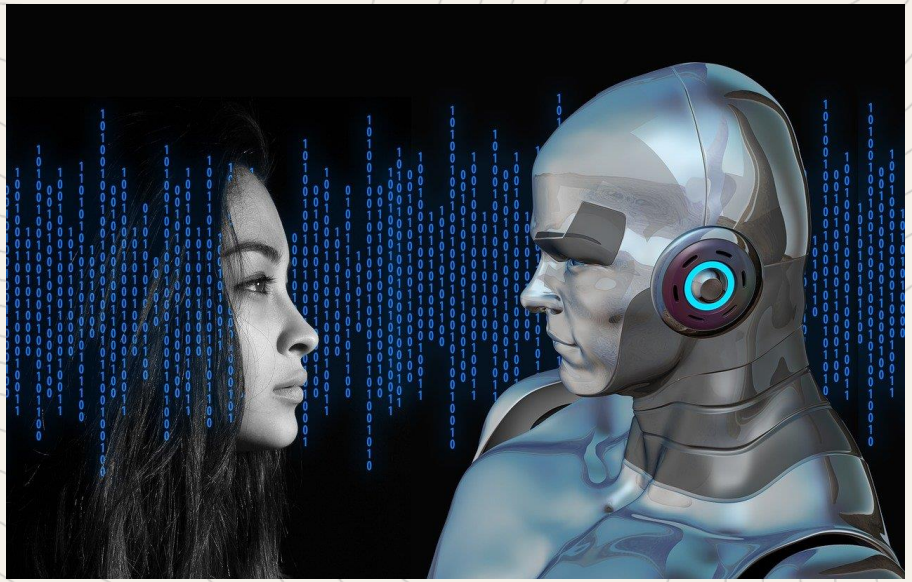
1) Investigate how the level of system autonomy affects human moral decisions and responsibility (*Salatino et al., 2025, Acta Psychologica)*

Setup: Simulated battlefield

Task: Cadets had to decide to **initiate (or not)** an attack based on conflicting moral values (i.e. presence of enemies and allies at risk)

AI Level	What the AI Did
Level 0	Gave basic information about safe zones
Level 1	Showed risk to allies (probability + number)
Level 2	Recommended the safest choice

decreasing of Responsibility during the interaction with the autonomous system



increasing of Utilitarian Choice (i.e., the choices that **lead to the least loss**) as recommended by the autonomous system

increasing RTs in the morally challenging scenario

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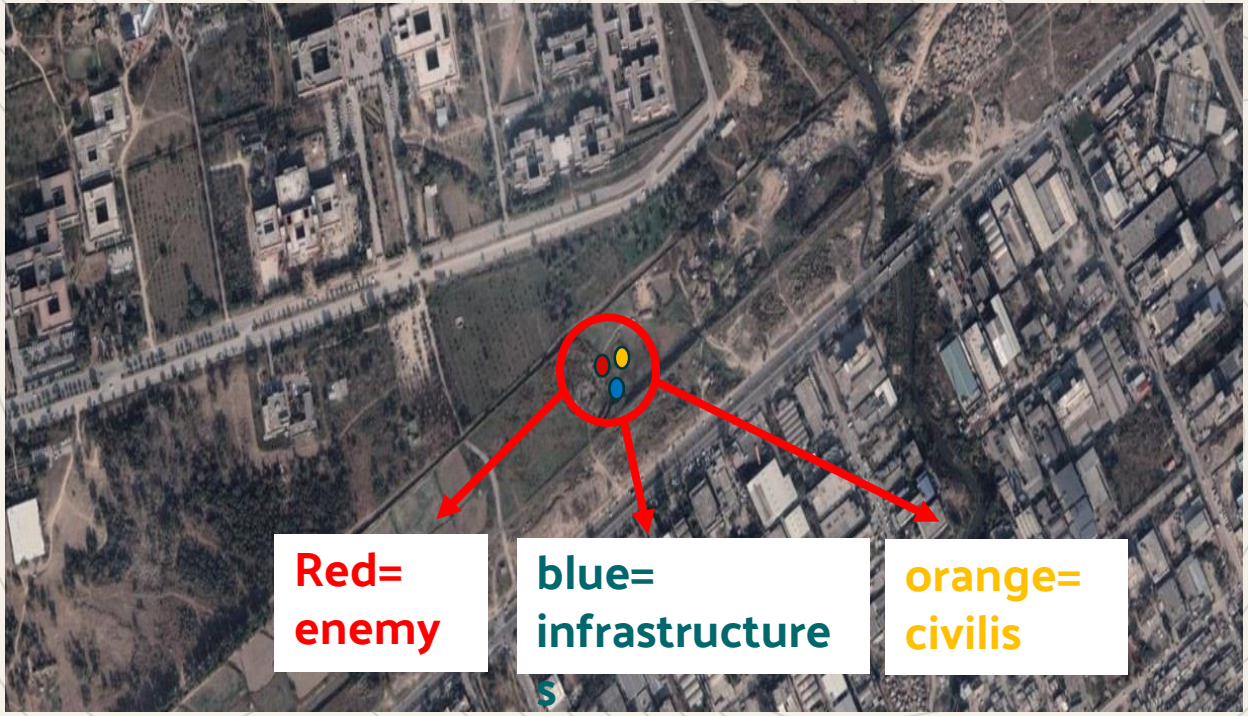
2) Investigate how AI behaviour influences moral decisions and sense of responsibility (*Salatino et al., 2025, Scientific Reports)*



Task: To initiate an **attack** (or **not**)

Trials: Moral and Non moral

AI Level	What the AI Did
Level 0	not assisted
Aggressive AI	always attack
Conservative AI	never attack

increasing of number of attack during **Aggressive AI**
Assistance in morally challenging situations

increasing RTs in the morally challenging scenario

decrease of Responsibility during interaction with the **AI**

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3) Investigate the impact of Time Pressure on Moral Decision-Making and responsibility during Human-AI Interaction (*Salatino et al., 2025, Human Factors and Systems Interaction)*

Time Pressure Manipulation

2 Blocks **High**-time-pressure: **4**

2 Blocks **Low**-time-pressure: **15**

1) **No-AI**

2) **Aggr-AI**

decrease of Responsibility during the **interaction** with the **AI**

decrease of Responsibility during **high time pressure** in moral trials

increasing of number of attack during **Aggressive AI**

no effects of Time pressure

increasing RTs in the morally challenging scenario

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Discussion

Overall, our results show that:

- ✓ Humans tend to **follow AI recommendations** in morally challenging situations

→ even when the input is **clearly erroneous**

- ✓ Not depend to **high-time** pressure
- ✓ Humans feel **less responsible** during the interaction with the AI, consistently with previous findings

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Conclusions & Future directions

Next steps:

Investigate the **characteristics** of AI and the **conditions** that can promote moral decision-making without producing negative effects

Use neuroimaging techniques (**EEG** and **fNIRS**) to uncover the **neural signatures** of moral reasoning during AI interaction

DEFENSIELABORATORIA-LABORATOIRES DE LA DÉFENSE (DLD)
KATLEEN DE MEULENAERE, A4 ADVISEUR-GENERAAL

DEFENCE

12 sept 2025

Defensielaboratoria – **L**aboratoires de la **D**éfense
DLD
Belgian Defence Laboratories

DLD : Missions

Support to Readiness & Operations

CBRN risk control and mitigation
experts ,reach-back ,Training

Health ,Safety & Environment
detection, sampling, analysis

Petrol, Oil & Lubricants
quality control

Defence against CBRN terrorism (national level)

Suspicious packages

Reference laboratory for chemical analysis (CWA)

CBRN terro & Nuclear contigency plans

« Joint » Life Cycle Support

CBRN Protection & Individual Equipment

Petrol, Oil & Lubricants

Centre of Excellence

Scientific & technical expertise

Applied research

innovation and development of (new) capabilities (technology and processes)

CBRN

Textiles/Materials

Energy

DLD: Technical Department

Comd
Luc Claes

Technical Manager (TM)
Katleen De Meulenaere

Adjoint TM
Benoît Augustyns

Research Coordinator
Catherine Dumont

Ops Coordinator
Wim Bruyninckx

Bio Coordinator
Béatrice Sulka

LABS

Biological Lab
Gilles Fastré

Chemical Analysis (OPCW)
Philippe François

Radiological & Nuclear Protection
Christine Mertens

Federal Orientation Lab
Saul Dewulf

Detection, Sampling & Sample preparation
Renée Vanheusden

CBRN Protection & Individual Equipment
Hilda Wullens

Petrol, Oil, Lubricants & Energy
Ruben Muyllaert

Research domain:

- **CBRN**
- **CBRN , Textile & Materials**
- **Energy**

DLD : Research domains

CBRN

Detection, Identification & Monitoring and sampling

Hazard Management

Forensics/ traces

Individual and collective protection

Material & Textiles

Protection & Comfort

Innovative technologies

Smart technologies

Energy

Green energy

Petrol, Oil & Lubricants

DLD : Research domains - Energy

Energy

Green energy

Petrol, Oil & Lubricants

Hydrogen panels: New Green Energy Systems

Compatibility of “green” non-conventional fuels

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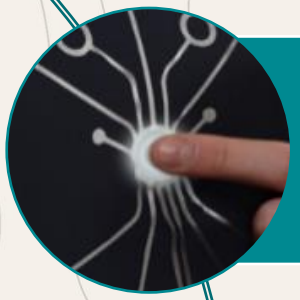
DLD : Research domains – Materials & Textiles

Material & Textiles

Protection & Comfort

Innovative technologies

Smart technologies



Smart textiles for enhanced CBRN protection

Optimisation of clothing systems for thermophysiological comfort

Modelling breakthrough time of filters under operational conditions

DLD : Research domains - CBRN

CBRN

Detection, Identification & Monitoring and sampling

Hazard Management

Forensics/ traces

Individual and collective protection

Decontamination & Contaminated Evidence Management

Toxins identification & detection

Biological threats identification & bio-surveillance and -monitoring

Chemical threats identification & detection, technical exploitation

Radiological and Nuclear prevention & protection

DLD: Strenghts - Research network

Direct link with Readiness and Operations

Several other research projects are also underway at the DLD with various partners and collaborators:

- **International military-scientific cooperation**
  - Academic, military, federal, clinical, industrial
- **Belgian Defence**
  - Military end-users
- **Support to the Nation**
  - Crisis management, public health
- **NATO**
  - Research groups/panels
- **EU**
  - Research consortia

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Interested?

WELCOME
to visit
our booth at the
network event (1300 hrs)

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RESEARCH MANAGER
KATIA PACELLA

12 September 2025

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R&D at the Queen Astrid Military Hospital

RMA Brussels
Royal Military Academy

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. R&D Vision at the QAMH
3. Research pillars
4. Conclusions

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Introduction: The Queen Astrid Military Hospital

Queen Astrid Military Hospital – Overview

- Provides medical support to military operations worldwide with specialised personnel and equipment.
- Ensures health and operational readiness of military personnel across multiple disciplines.
- Around 800 staff delivering advanced medical services.
- Centre of expertise for screening and training specialised units (pilots, divers, para-commandos).
- Offers tailored medical care for the unique demands of military service.

Key domains of excellence:

- Emergency, disaster, and trauma medicine
- Burn care and rehabilitation
- Surgery and musculoskeletal rehab
- Sports medicine, nutrition, and physical rehab
- Mental health (focus on crisis psychology)Infectious and travel medicine
- Hyperbaric medicine

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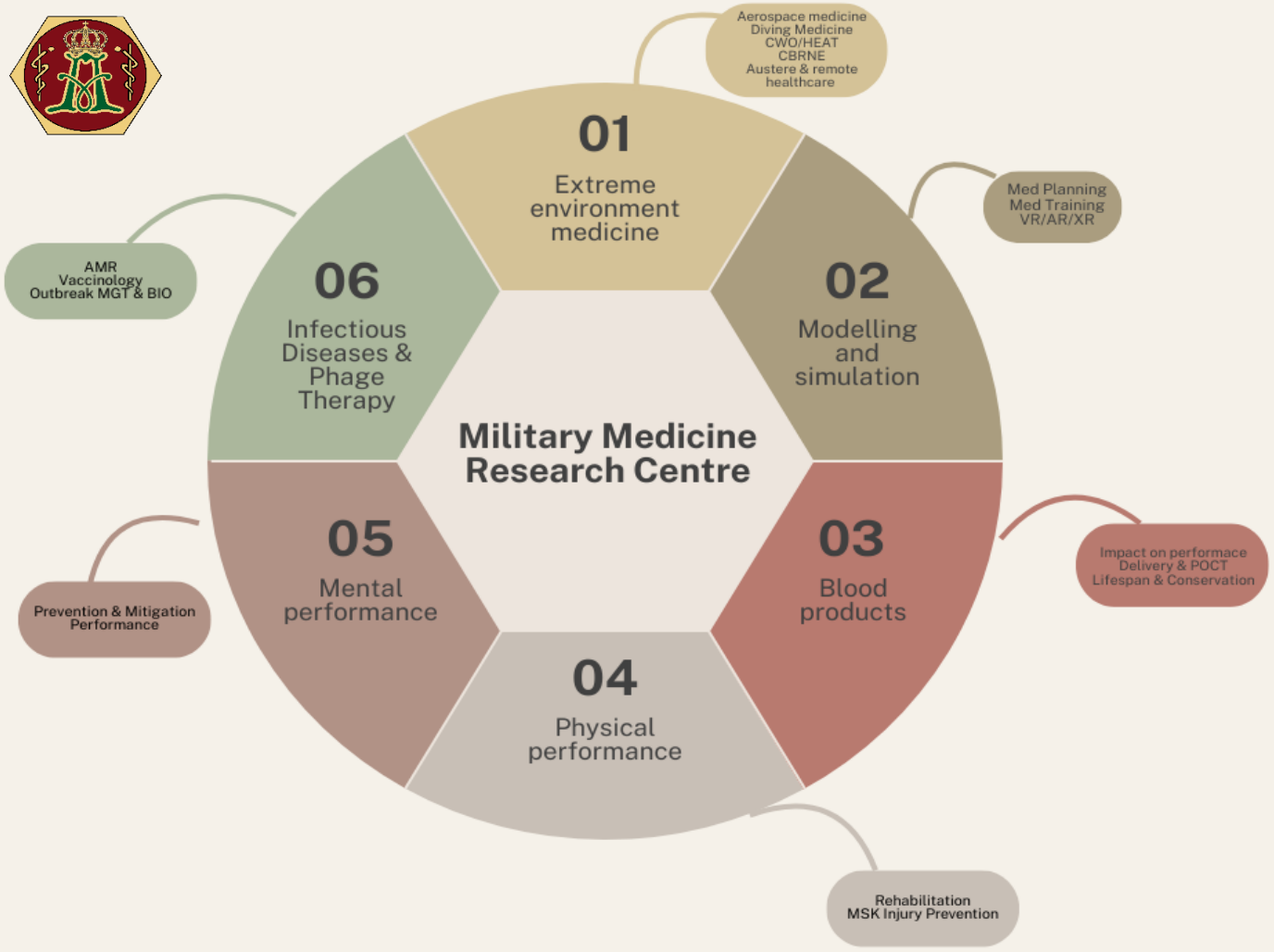
R&D Vision: The Military Medicine Research Centre

Through research, QAMH aims to deepen and broaden its expertise, fostering development in specific medical fields



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Extreme Environment Medicine

Clinical research

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine 55 No. 2 June 2025 104

Effect of normobaric and hyperbaric hyperoxia treatment on symptoms and cognitive capacities in Long COVID patients: a randomised placebo-controlled, prospective, double-blind trial

Leen D'hoore[1], Peter Germonpré[1,2], Bert Rinia[1], Leonard Caeyers[1], Nancy Stevens[1], Costantino Balestra[2,3,4]

[1] *Centre for Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy, Queen Astrid Military Hospital, Brussels, Belgium*
[2] *DAN Europe Research Division, Roseto, Italy and Brussels, Belgium*
[3] *Environmental, Occupational, Aging (Integrative) Physiology Laboratory, Haute Ecole Bruxelles-Brabant (HE2B), Brussels, Belgium*
[4] *Motor Sciences Department, Physical Activity Teaching Unit, Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Brussels, Belgium*

Corresponding author: *Dr Peter Germonpré, Queen Astrid Military Hospital, Bruynstraat 1, B-1120 Brussels, Belgium*
ORCiD: *0000-0003-2481-7376*
peter.germonpre@mil.be

Keywords
COVID-19; Hyperbaric oxygen; Randomised controlled trial; SARS-CoV-2

Comparison of the effects of two types of scopolamine treatment on sea-sickness

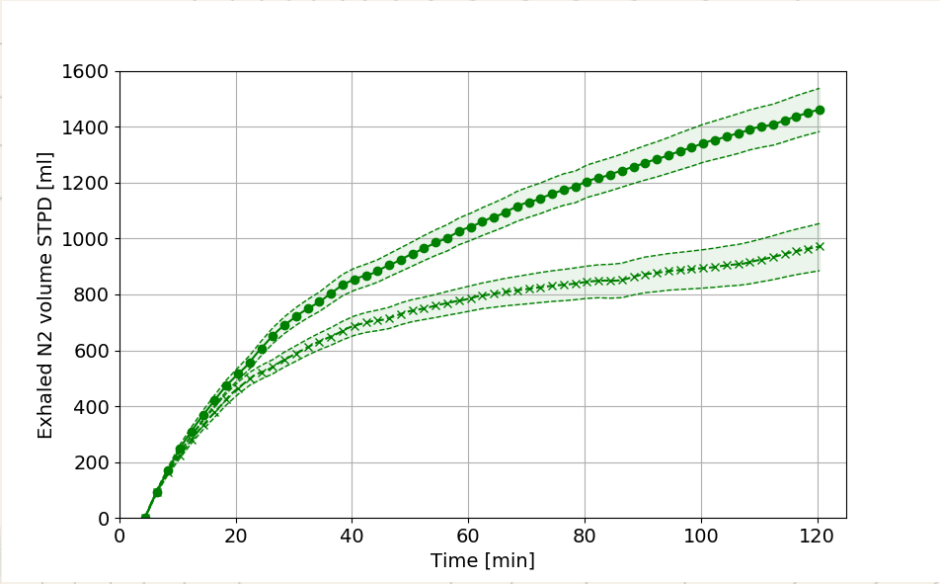
Extreme Environment Medicine

Technical Research

Prevention of Decompression Sickness

Development of a novel method and measurement system to quantify nitrogen gas exchange during decompression, the initiating step leading to decompression sickness.

- Validated system
- Initial N_2 elimination measurements after hyperbaric exposure
- Experiments revealed previously unrecognized variability
- Applicable to military divers and high-altitude operations



Blood products

Research Projects

« Blood far forward – a BEL walking blood bank concept »

STEP 1: Indications for use

Literature review

STEP 2: Donor safety

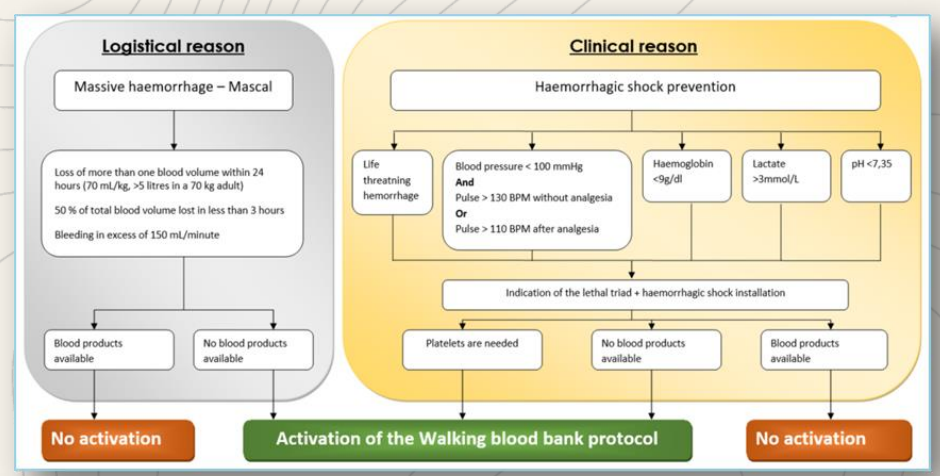
Donors Performances testing

STEP 3: Patient safety

Haemostatic properties: whole blood

STEP 4: Protocol of use

Development walking blood bank : BEL concept



Physical performance

Researchers: Dr Eric Bernard
PhD Veerle Stevens
PhD candidate Maaike Polspoel
PhD candidate CPN Med Thomas Van Haele
PhD Candidate Eddy Roosense

Mission Statement

Multidisciplinary research on, physical performance, musculoskeletal injury prevention, optimized rehabilitation for military personnel

Ensure a fit, healthy, and operationally deployable force, prepared to meet todays and tomorrow's geopolitical and operational challenges.

Research in training physiology and MSKI prevention

- Analyze the interaction between the soldier, the task, and the environment
- Use advanced analytics, AI and wearables for personalized, evidence-based training
- Build normative data to improve performance and reduce injuries
- Lead Defence-specific projects and collaborate with universities and military partners

Research in Rehabilitation

- Develop advanced protocols for injuries, mild traumatic brain injuries, and chronic pain
- Apply AR, computer vision and biofeedback for optimized recovery
- Integrate mental health support into rehabilitation
- Collaborate globally for evidence-based recovery strategies

Mental Performance

R&D Centre for Mental Health

Primary Prevention

Military personnel during pre-deployment training (PDT).

Secondary Prevention

Military personnel involved in Potentially Traumatic Events.

Example of tools: *TReMo* (Trauma Reactions Monitoring).

Tertiary Prevention

Military personnel suffering from trauma-related psychological disorders.

Phage Therapy & Infectious Disease

Therapeutic use of bacteriophages for the treatment of pathogenic bacterial infection

1. Evaluation of the indication based on medical hystory
2. Performing phage susceptibility tests on patient's strain (LabMCT)
3. Estabilishing treatment protocol with local treating team
4. Follow-up during and after phage therapy

We are a renowned coordination and production center :

- More than **600 requests** since 2023
- More than **220 phage therapy treatments** given in 14 different countries
- Around **25 APIs** (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients) targeting different bacterial species and many phages in research
- Many articles published including one in the famous journal ***Nature***
- Collaboration with other Hospitals and Institutions on **many projects** (ex: Ephicaci with UZLeuven)

nature microbiology

Article

Personalized bacteriophage therapy outcomes for 100 consecutive cases: a multicentre, multinational, retrospective observational study

Pirnay et al. Nat. Microbiol. 2024 Jun;9(6):1434-1453.

Editorial

Advocating for phage therapy

Pirnay J.- P., Djebara S. et al., Nat. Microbiol. 2024 Jun;9(6):1434-1453

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Senior Researchers: Dr Tea Glonti
Dr Anandi Martin
Dr Maya Merabishvili

Phage therapy at the QAMH

SYNERGY

Real-time optimization of the design of personalized phage cocktail ecology

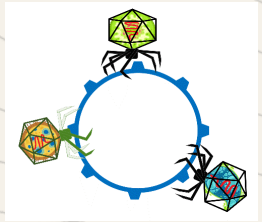
antibiotics MDPI

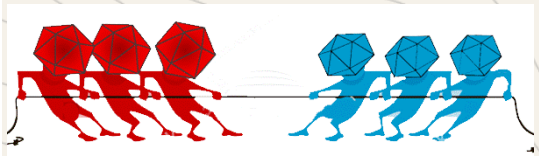
Article

Use of the Naturally Occurring Bacteriophage Grouping Model for the Design of Potent Therapeutic Cocktails

Tea Glonti [1,*], Michael Goossens [1], Christel Cochez [1], Sabrina Green [2], Sayali Gorivale [2], Jeroen Wagemans [2], Rob Lavigne [2] and Jean-Paul Pirnay [1]

synergy **Proto-cooperation** **antagonism**

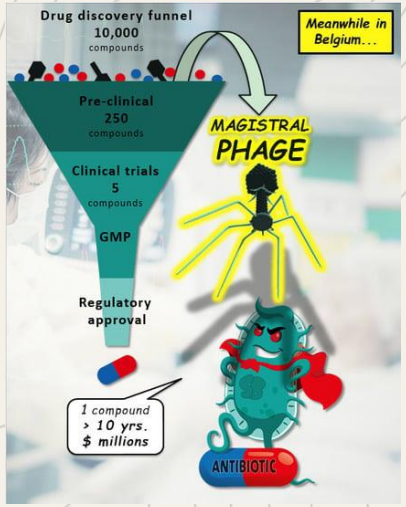




RESILIENCE PROJECT

The aim of RESILIENCE-R is to develop and test novel medical countermeasures against Chemical, Biological and Nuclear (CBRN) threats

RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF PERSONALIZED BACTERIOPHAGE THERAPY OF DIFFICULT-TO TREAT INFECTIONS



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& Infectious Disease

Finished trials (statistical analysis ongoing)

SINGLE-R : Clinical trial on a shortened administration schedule for administering the rabies vaccine.

The MALARIAPP (Digital Health Trial): To determine compliance to malaria prophylactic measures in travelers.

- which predictors for full compliance can be determined?
- the frequency and type of side effects of malaria chemoprophylaxis
- the effect of a daily digital reminder on full compliance
- the effect of a weekly digital reminder on full compliance

Future clinical trials

BAZOOKA Clinical trial on boostability of rabies vaccination

Simplifying and improving the accessibility of vaccination schedules for military and travelers

Conclusions - Collaborations & Project Funding

Collaborative research and development

Defence Funded Research program

Royal Military Academy
Defence laboratories
Military Hospital Queen Astrid

National

belspo

DEFRA
DEFENCE-RELATED RESEARCH ACTION

Vlaanderen

FÉDÉRATION

Structural Collaborative Research in Military Medicine (SCRiMM)

Internationa

EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY

European Commission

NATO OTAN
Science & Technology Organization

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Visit our booth to get all the details!!

Other material (kits, articles, documents) on:

- Blood products (PhD Maj Maj Julie Degueldre)
- Phage Therapy (PhD Anandi Martin)

Posters on:

- *Decompression Research for Belgian Defence Aviation and Diving* by **Sven De Ridder**, Xavier Neyt, Nathalie Pattyn and Peter Germonpré.
- *Validating Physical Activity Thresholds in Active Populations* by **Maaike Polspoel**, Col. Damien Van Tiggelen, Tara Reilly and Patrick Calders.
- *Centre for Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation* by **Eric Bernard**, **Maaike Polspoel**, Eddy Roosens, Veerle Stevens and Thomas Van Hale.
- *In Vitro Evaluation Of The Dynamic Mode - Synergy, Proto-Cooperation, And Antagonism - To Develop Effective Phage Therapeutic Cocktails* by Tea Glonti, Jean-Paul Pirnay.
- *Evaluation of the effects of myofascial fibrolysis on burn scars* by **Léá Berthel** , Yves BUSEGNIES , **Denis Van Goethem** , Thomas ROSE, Arnaud Taets
- *App-based monitoring of malaria preventive measures in travelers to high-risk countries* by **Sami Alcedo**, Charlien Hupko, Ula Maniewski-Kelner, Mieke Croughs, Patrick Soentjens.

Thank you for your attention!

Contacts:

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Damien VAN TIGGELEN, PhD Col Advisor Research, Development and Innovation COMOPSMED

Damien.VanTiggelen@mil.be

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PROF CARL CEULEMANS

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Research Day – 12 September 2025

Department Behavioral Sciences (SCGW)

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Content

- Research Unit for Military Law
- Research Unit for Military Ethics
- Center for Military Social Research

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Research Unit for Military Law

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Research Unit for Military Law

Research topics:

- International legal challenges of modern warfare, in particular as regards new tactics, means and methods, with a specific focus on accountability and responsibility

- Punishment & Internment of suspects of collaboration 1944-1950

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Research Unit for Military Law

Some current research projects:

- Armed COnflict and DISinformation: Analysing and Strengthening the International Legal Framework against Fake News in Conflict Situations (**ACODIS – HFM/23-01**) (Promotor: Prof. S. Dewulf; researcher: L. Vandeput)
    - PhD: "(Il)legal use of disinformation against combatants in armed conflicts"

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Research Unit for Military Law

Some current research projects:

- A Belgian Integrated Approach to LawFare – towards a defensive and offensive legal strategy in a European and international context (**BIALF – HFM/24-01**) (Promotor: Prof. S. Dewulf – researcher: A.-C. Baron)
    - PhD: “L’utilisation du droit international pénal par la Belgique comme stratégie de lawfare en relation avec les conflits armés”

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Research Unit for Military Ethics

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Research Unit for Military Ethics

Research Topics

- Ethics and modern military technology (drone warfare, (semi-) autonomous weapon systems, cyber warfare, etc.)
- The impact of the changing nature of warfare on the ethical Tradition of the Just War (terrorism, targeted killing, R2P, PMCs, ….)
- Theoretical developments within the domain of military ethics (role of virtue ethics, introduction of new extensions within JWT, such as *jus ante bellum*, *jus post bellum*, *jus ad vim*, debate on revisionist military ethics, etc).

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Research Unit for Military Ethics

Some current research projects:

STRD-project HFM 22-03: “Ethics and AI. From Moral Virtues to Duties”. (2022-2026; ; in collaboration with Institute of Philosophy KU Leuven)

DFR-RMA HFM 25-13:“Moral Implications of the Use of AI in the Mitigation of Civilian Casualties” (2025-2029: in collaboration with Institute of Philosophy KU Leuven)

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Center for Military Social Research

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Center for Military Social Research

At the crossroads of Defence & Society

The chair of sociology explores the intersection of Defence and society. Our expertise covers operational analysis, recruitment, work satisfaction and organizational culture. We conduct surveys on security and Defence issues, personnel motivation and organizational diversity.

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Center for Military Social Research

Focus Areas

- ✓ Work satisfaction & motivation
- ✓ Recruitment, attrition & retention
- ✓ Organizational culture & image
- ✓ Diversity & inclusion
- ✓ Building societal and institutional resilience
- ✓ Public and private partnerships

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Center for Military Social Research

Bridging the Gap: Exploring the Intersection of Belgian Military Reservists and Civilian Life

Focus:

- Motivation, integration and experiences of Belgian reservists in a changing context
- Key concepts: Total Defence Force, multiple identities, organizational culture
- Mixed-method approach: literature + quantitative survey + qualitative interviews with reservists and civilian employers

Objectives:

- Gain insights on the experiences, integration and motivation of reservists in Belgium
- Provide Defence with accurate data and recommendations for recruitment and retention strategies

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Center for Military Social Research

Recruitment & Integration of Youth in the Belgian Defence

Focus:

- Evaluate partnerships with public and private actors
- Analyse Reboot4You and SUC project
- Examine voluntary military service initiative for youth

Objectives:

- Assess effectiveness of partnerships in recruitment and retention
- Examine career trajectories of young recruits
- Analyse role of Reboot4You and SUC in professional development

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CONFLICT STUDIES
PROF DR SARA VAN HOEYMISSEN

12 September 2025

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Conflict Studies (COST)

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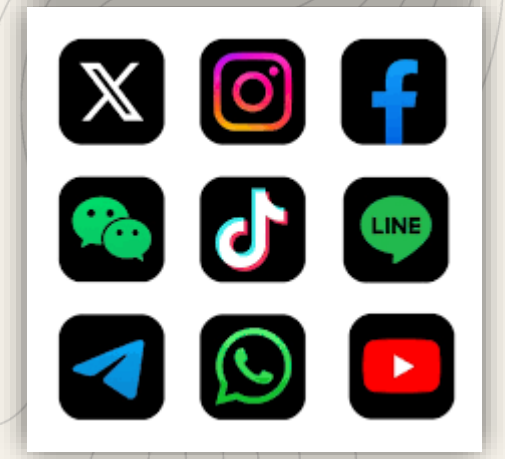
Does Ukraine show the future of conflict and war, or its past?

Is the rise of multipolarity a genuine alternative to Western hegemony, or simply a rebranding of old imperialist ambitions?

Can we learn something about resilience from our own past?



How can democratic societies balance openness and security?

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For all these questions, and more, one place to look for answers at the RMA:

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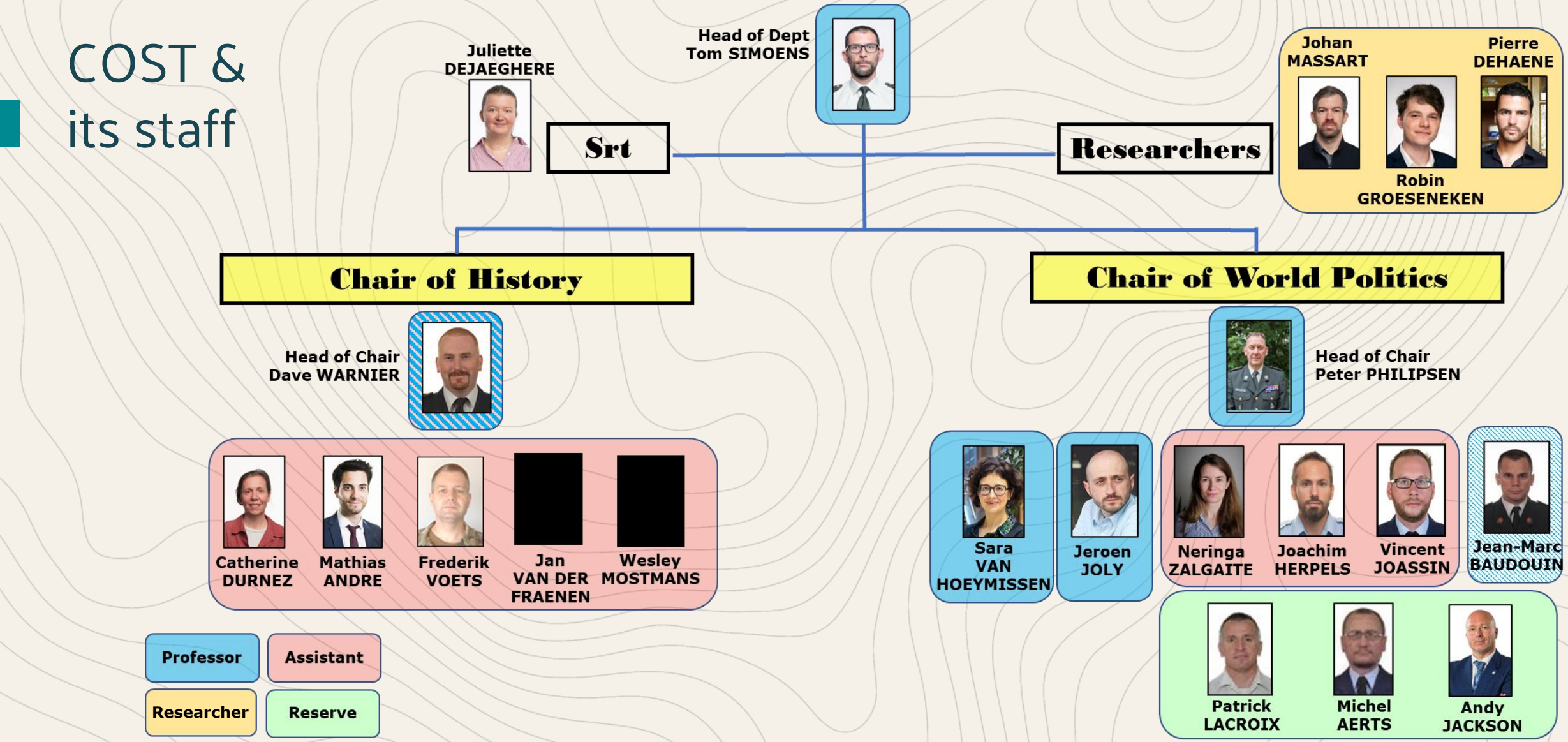
COST & its staff



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Research focus - History

Belgian military history in the 20th century

WW1 – Interwar Period – WW2 – *Cold War*

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Research projects - History

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
SHERPA (Ongoing: 2024-2028)	examines the daily life experience of the Belgian military during the **Phoney War (Sep 1939 - May 1940)** in order to confirm or reject the long held view of a Belgian army troubled by social tensions and political twists rendering it incapable of effectively fighting the German invasion of May 1940.
BRAVE (Planned: 2025-2029)	explores the impact of Belgian officers on the **World War II** resistance. It seeks to understand the extent of their participation and impact: did these officers enhance the resistance's effectiveness and efficiency?
BELMILCAS (Ongoing: 2023-2027)	aims to determine how many Belgian military have died in operations **since 1945**, to clarify the operational circumstances of their deaths and to see how public opinion and politicians responded to this loss of life.
CIVBEL (Planned: 2026-2029)	analyses how Belgium established a complex system of civil-military coordination committees and commissions **between 1950 and 1992** to facilitate civil protection and ensure the survival of critical infrastructure and services in times of crisis or war.

Research focus - World Politics

Impact of geopolitical changes on Belgian and EU Foreign Policy

with special attention to the big actors like China, the USA and Russia, and to the Global South

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Research projects – World Politics

GEOPOLITICAL CHANGES		BELGIAN AND EU FOREIGN POLICY	
PROJECT	*KEYWORDS*	*PROJECT*	*KEYWORDS*
EMPORIA (Ongoing: 2024-2028)	Emerging Powers Maritime Security Geo-Economics	**MISTIC** (Ongoing: 2024-2029)	Military spending Political Narratives
NADYR (Planned: 2026-2030)	Disinformation Social Media War in Ukraine	**BEL-POP** (Planned: 2027-2031)	Formation of and shifts in public opinion Global politics and international security
PEGASUS (Planned: 2026-2030)	EU-Global South relations Critical raw materials Great Power competition		

Outputs

Academic publications


Political Psychology

ISPP

ORIGINAL ARTICLE | Open Access

What personality traits do citizens want politicians to have? Observational and experimental evidence of citizens' preferences in three countries

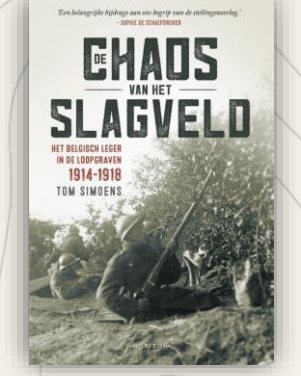
Thomas Bergeron, Eran Amsalem, Lior Sheffer, Jeroen Joly, Peter John Loewen

First published: 03 June 2025 | https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.70043

SECTIONS | PDF | TOOLS | SHARE

Abstract

Politicians' personality is believed to play a central role in their electoral success. It is unclear, however, how important different traits are to voters and how the impact of personality compares to that of other well-studied individual characteristics of politicians, such as gender, age, and political experience. Drawing on evidence from three studies—an observational study ($N = 4543$), a survey experiment ($N = 1031$), and a preregistered conjoint experiment ($N = 4313$)—conducted in Belgium, Canada, and Israel, we demonstrate that citizens value some traits (e.g., conscientiousness) more than others (e.g., extraversion) when choosing candidates. We also show that the relative effect of politicians' personality is greater than that of other individual characteristics. These results highlight the central role of elite personality in our understanding of voting behavior.


DE CHAOS VAN HET SLAGVELD

HET BELGISCH LEGER IN DE LOOPGRAVEN 1914-1918

TOM SIMOENS


THE INTERNATIONAL SPECTATOR
2025, VOL. 60, NO. 2, 1–19
https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2024.2378803

ISPI Istituto Affari Internazionali | Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

ESSAY

Check for updates

Shadowboxing: The People's Republic of China's Use of Informal Trade Restrictions as a Rising Power

Sara Van Hoeymissen

Royal Military Academy, Brussels

ABSTRACT

Since 2010, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has intermittently imposed informal trade restrictions on third countries following political disagreement. These occurrences reveal that the PRC increasingly sees the economic domain as a vector to assertively pursue its political interests as a rising power. At the same time, maintaining a favourable international environment to support its continued economic rise remains a key objective of the PRC's grand strategy. An informal approach to trade restrictions offers the PRC the possibility to engage in coercive influencing while safeguarding its ability to stay connected to the global economy and its main protagonists. This is achieved through deniable and selective coercive measures that avoid raising already acute generalised threat perceptions within and among target states in order to prevent firm balancing responses from emerging. However, as recent experience with the PRC's initiatives highlights, coercive measures have limitations as a wedge strategy. Most notably, rather than dividing targets, they may serve to strengthen ties between them.

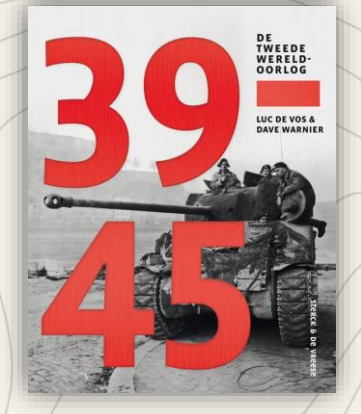
KEYWORDS

China; coercive economic statecraft; informal trade restrictions; wedge strategy; rising power


Le char de combat est-il mort dans la guerre en Ukraine? Quelques réponses fournies par l'Histoire

Mathias Andre

Publications and initiatives for a broader audience




Lezing Tom Simoens: Oekraïne en de Eerste Wereldoorlog – Terug naar de loopgraven

04 February 2024 - Zonnebeke - Bron: MMP1917

Luitenant-kolonel Tom Simoens, docent aan de Koninklijke Militaire School, vergeleek het Oekraïense tegenoffensief met de Slag bij Passendale. De strijd lijkt vast te zitten. Beide partijen hebben zich verschanst in kilometers brede opeenvolgende verdedigingslinies. Drones snorren door de lucht met het gedonder van zware artillerie in hun kielzog. De gewone soldaat op de grond wordt schijnbaar aan zijn lot overgelaten.


weekend Focus

le vif.

Ukraine

« L'Ukraine ne doit pas tomber dans ce piège » : la guerre arrive-t-elle aussi en Russie?

Noé Spies

La guerre sur le sol russe, un processus « inévitable », comme le clame le président ukrainien Zelensky ? Pour le


DeMorgen.

IN HET NIEUWS | BETER LEVEN | MENINGEN | POLITIEK | TV & CULTUUR | TECH & WETENSCHAP | SPORT | PUZZELS

Interview Sara Van Hoeymissen

'Dit is geen kraan die wordt open- en dichtgedraaid': over het handelsakkoord tussen de VS en China

Media contributions

Royal Military Academy

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What can we do for/with you?

Joint development of a multiple-year research project on a topic of mutual interest

Student dissertation research on a topic of your interest

Joint organisation of conferences, study days, workshops…

Research-based input on contemporary (policy) issues

Training

Vesalius College (VUB), Global Governance Institute (GGI) Summer Schoool

…

RMA Brussels
Royal Military Academy

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DEFENCE

Questions?

RMA Brussels
Royal Military Academy

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMY, MANAGEMENT, AND LEADERSHIP
FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND MILITARY SCIENCES

DEFENCE

12 September 2025

Research at the Department of Economy, Management and Leadership

RMA Brussels
Royal Military Academy

The Economic Statecraft of China

Threat analysis, e.g.:

- Shadowboxing: The People's Republic of China's Use of Informal Trade Restrictions as a Rising Power
- Sino-Belgian Research Collaborations and Chinese Military Power

Analysis of protective instruments, e.g.:

- Matrix of Geoeconomic Instruments

Monitoring, e.g.:

- Geopolitical Risk on the Firm-Level

EMPORIA - *Emerging powers' maritime nationalism and its consequences for Belgium and the EU*

To understand
the link between maritime security and economic nationalism.

By investigating
State strategies to build and wield maritime power, combining economic and military perspectives.

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EMPORIA - *Emerging powers' maritime nationalism and its consequences for Belgium and the EU*

Protecting Belgian and European maritime interests amid a changing geopolitical landscape and growing contestation in the maritime domain.

Source: Belga Port of Antwerp-Bruges sets world's first maritime GDP port certificate for pharma goods

Source: DEME to Use Special Drilling Tech Again as It Wins Second Major Offshore Wind Deal in France

Source: F-931 BNS Louise Marie Karel Doorman class Frigate Belgian Navy

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BEPIDS

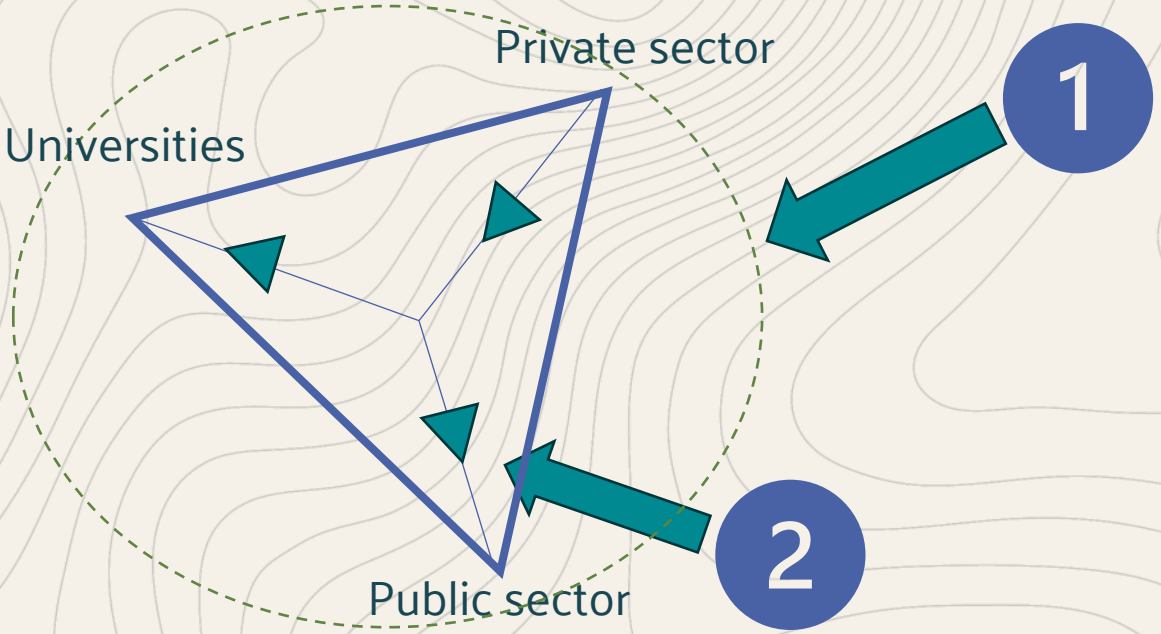
Belgian Economic Potential in the Industry of Defence and Security

→ Addresses some of the open points of the DIRS

1. Map the Belgian Defence Technological and Industrial Base (BE-DTIB) and develop a database*.
2. Development of policy toolkit and manual for support to research for the BE-DTIB in compliance with EU law

Research by: **RMA & VUB**
Funded by: **BELSPO (+optional allocation RHID)**

"What is the BE-DTIB and how can BE support it within the EDTIB?"



*continued on the prior work of ACOS STRAT-NAD and FPS Economy. BEPIDS continues such cooperation and aligns with the parties on content and functionality.

PATRIODS

Performance **A**ssessment **T**ool for **R**esearch & **I**nnovation support **O**f the Belgian **D**efence and **S**ecurity technological & industrial Base.
→ Sets up a system to evaluate measures and investments in the BE-D(S)TIB.

1. Evaluation of Support Mechanisms to understand effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness.

2. Development of a practical toolkit for the 3 phases of the support lifecycle (design, governance, ex-post evaluation) and a monitoring dashboard.

i.e.

"What is the impact of support mechanisms?" + sets up a system for better assessments.

Research by: **RMA & VUB**
Funded by: **BELSPO (Science4Policy)**

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VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL

belspo

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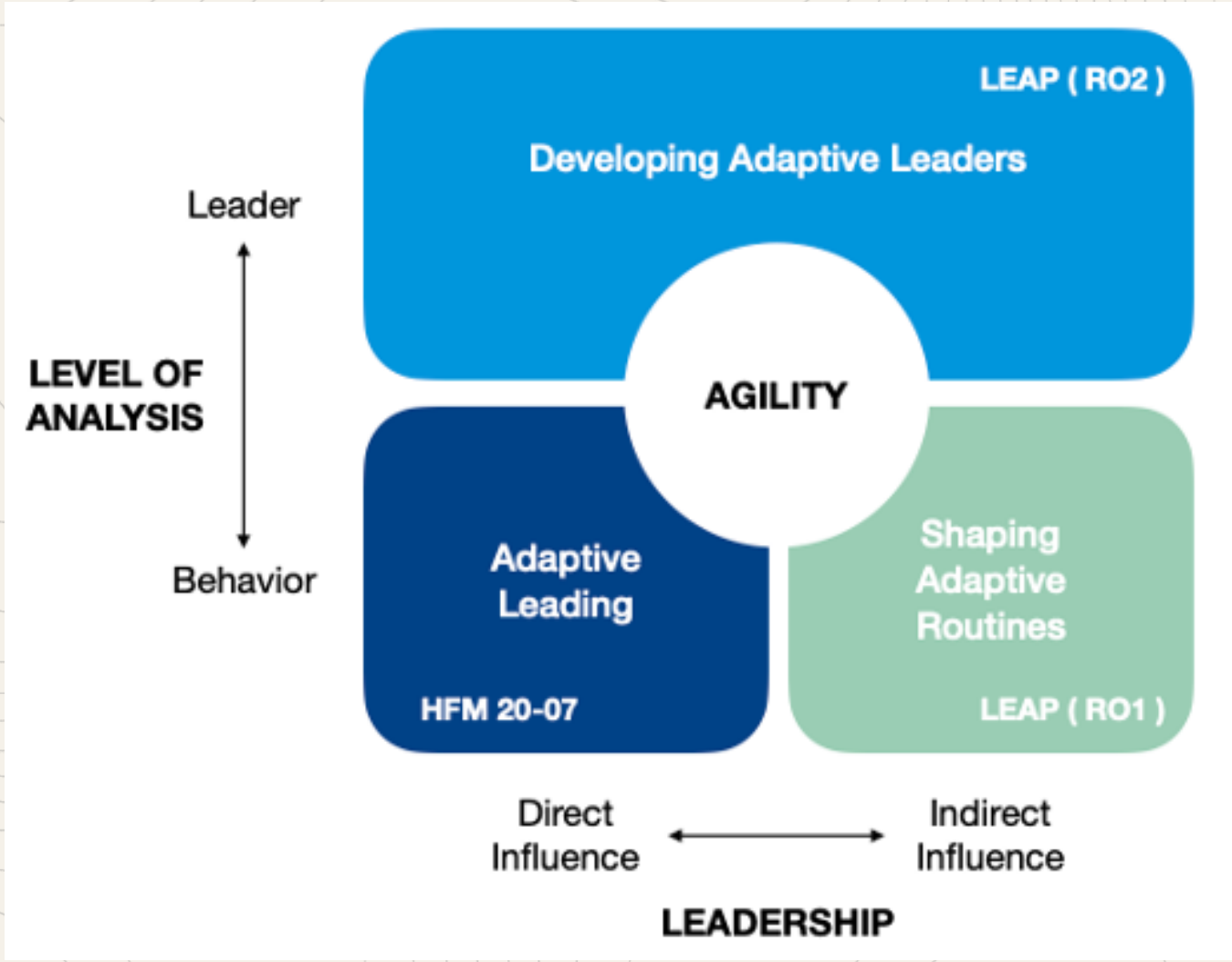
LEADERSHIP

Collaborative partners

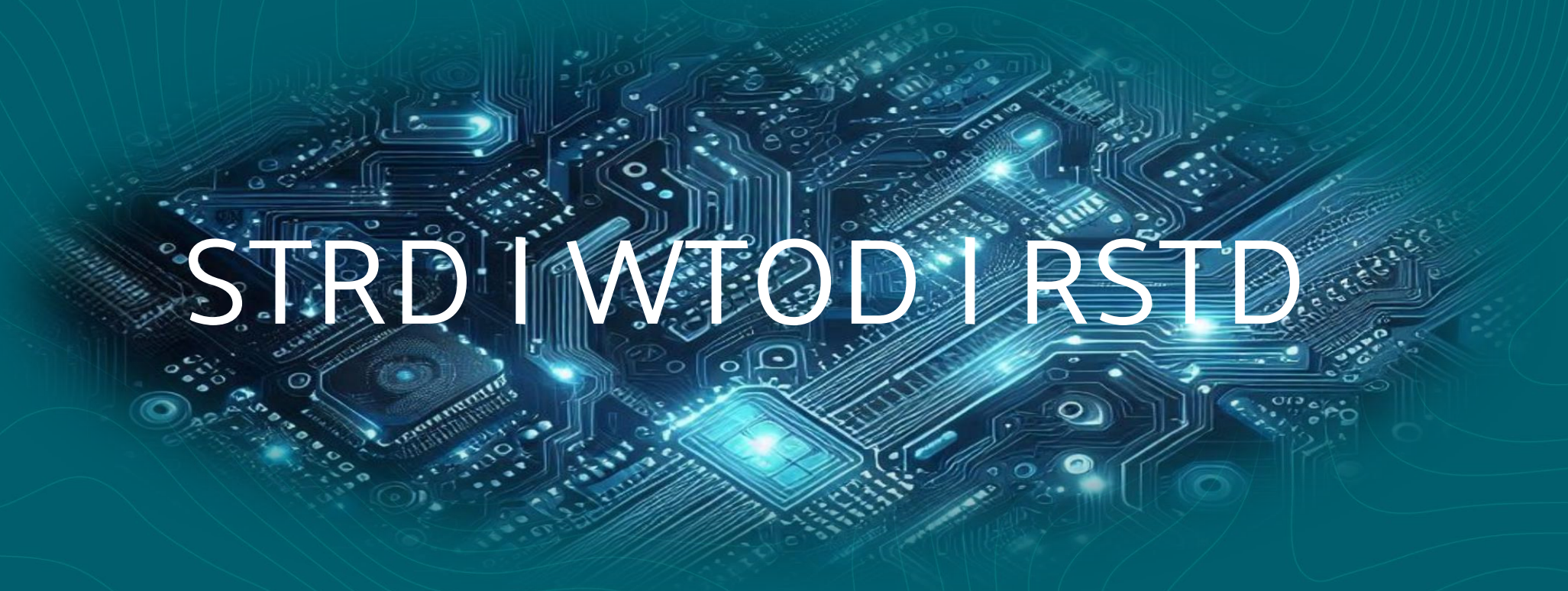


Funding acknowledgement: The project MACECS - HFM/20-07 & LEAP - HFM/25-12 are financed under the DFR call.

ROYAL HIGHER INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
LTCOL GENOUW JOHN (GS), DIR STRD

DEFENCE

12 Sep 2025



STRD I WTOD I RSTD

SCIENTIFIC & **T**ECHNOLOGICAL **R**ESEARCH FOR **D**EFENCE

Belgian Policy

2016 — 2020 - 2022 — 2025

Strategic vision for Defence

- Gradual increase of the R&T contribution for security and defence up to 2% of defence spending in 2030
- Strengthening the Scientific, Technological and Industrial Potential
- Essential security interest to have a national DTIB

Policy Statement MOD (STAR plan)

- Development of a defense, industry, and research strategy (DIRS)
- ICCW the communities & regions
- R&T budget grows, specific DIRS Bg, Major development programs

Government agreement

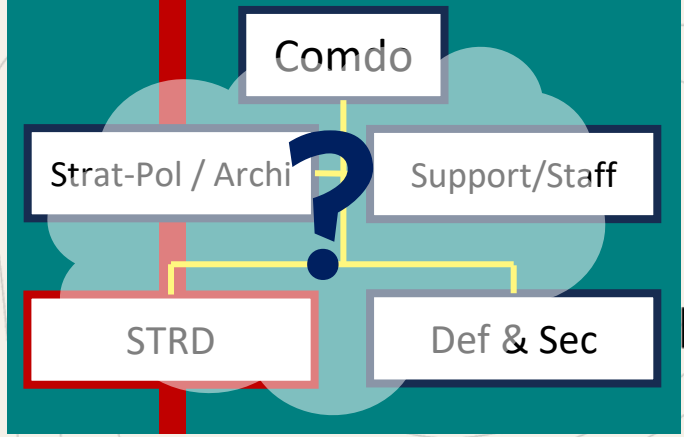
- RHID = Innovation Hub
- "DIRS is here to stay"
- Continued policy : Increased awareness, effort, resources

Belgian Defence 'Research, Technology & Innovation Vision 2030"

- The RHID wishes to be one of the driving forces for the development and the strengthening of the Belgian defence technological and industrial base (DTIB), in a European and NATO-framework, in order to develop a larger and better knowledge base, more effective military and industrial capabilities and a larger strategic autonomy in the security and defence domain.

⇨

- 5 vectors for Defence Research, Technology and Innovation
- RSTD Structure base (end 2024)



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The department for

Scientific and Technological Research of Defence

Supports the policy and strategy through 5 RTI vectors

From an internal scientific and technological research programme
to a research, technology and innovation policy
within a national and European context.

Structurally **reinforce the Belgian Defence**

R&T-capabilities
(Royal Military Academy, Defence laboratories,
Military Hospital Queen Astrid)

Develop a broader national knowledge and technological base

DEFRA
DEFENCE-RELATED RESEARCH ACTION

Science S4Policy

Stimulate and support **collaborative research and development**
(EDA, EDF, ESA, NATO)

EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY

European Commission

NATO OTAN
Science & Technology Organization

Facilitate short-cyclic **innovation projects for Defence**

INNOVATION FOR DEFENCE
DIANA
HEDI
EUDIS Business Accelerator

Create **ecosystems** for research, development and innovation

WORK IN PROGRESS

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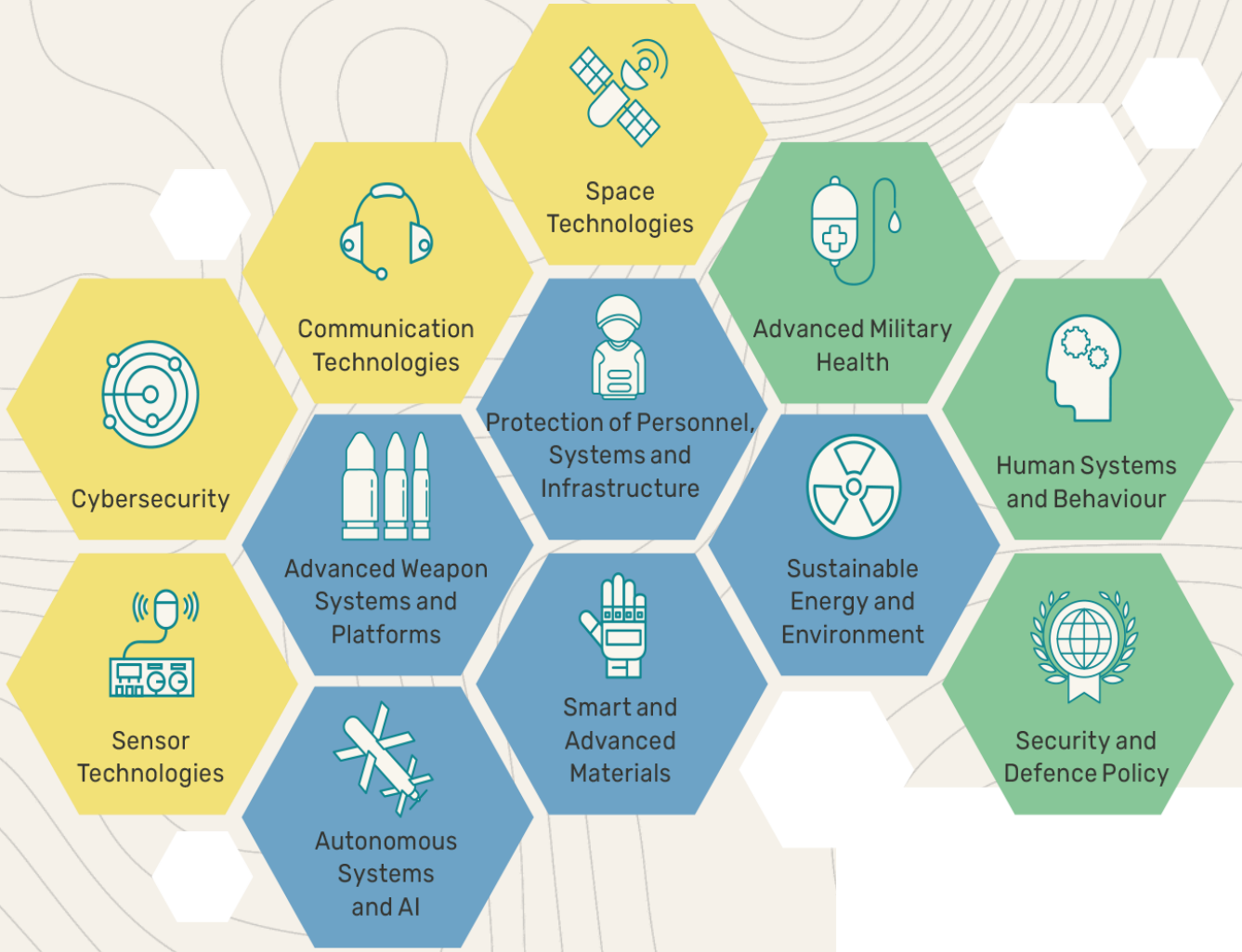
12 Research Areas

DAP	Data Acquisition and Processing
MSP	Mobility, Systems, and Protection
HFM	Human Factors and Medicine



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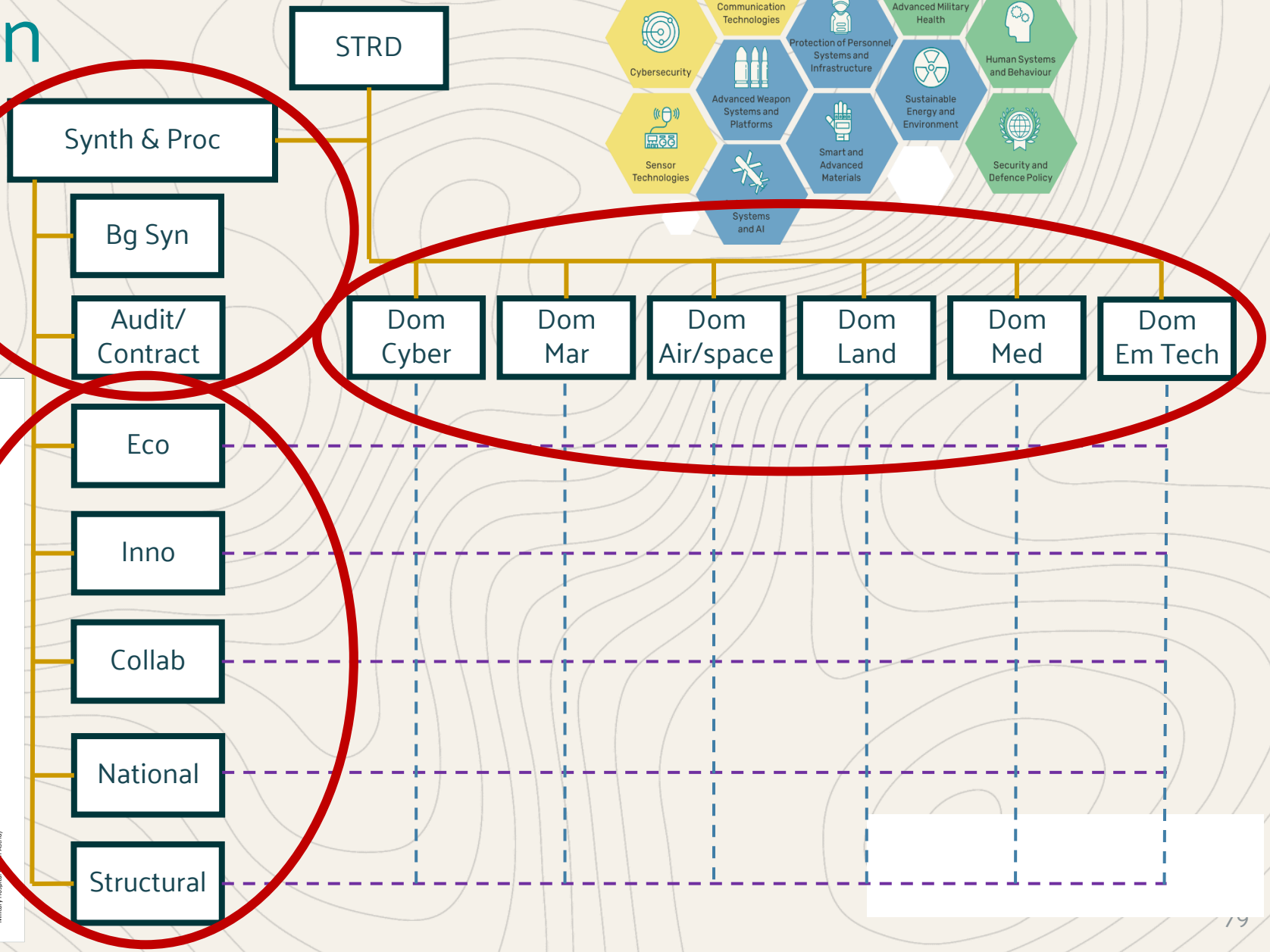
RSTD organisation

Current head count

- Bg follow up : 1 (=> 4)
- Coord : 6 (=> 8)
- Res Mgt : 8 (=> 11)



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Thank you

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Coffee Break

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LA DÉFENSE