WEBINAR 1

# Poster Presentation Overview

**International Forum for Peace, Security & Prosperity 2027**

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Centre for Military Research, Education, Practice & Engagement

# Understanding the assessment, expectations, common mistakes and marking criteria

Professor Gerri Matthews-Smith & Emma Gall

UNDERGRADUATE SESS

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# By the end of this session

You should know what you are producing and how assessors will judge it.

01

## Assessment

What the poster presentation asks you to demonstrate

02

## Expectations

What strong undergraduate work looks like

03

## Common mistakes

What commonly weakens otherwise good work

04

## Marking criteria

How the six criteria translate into practical choices

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# What are you being assessed on?

A research poster supported by a clear, confident presentation.

### THE POSTER

A concise visual summary of your topic, search process, evidence, discussion and conclusions.

### THE PRESENTATION

A focused explanation delivered at an appropriate pace, without reading the poster or notes word for word.

### THE DISCUSSION

Accurate and relevant answers that show you understand the topic, evidence and wider context.

**Assessors consider all three parts together.**

# What strong undergraduate work demonstrates

- A clear understanding of the published evidence on the chosen topic
- A search based on peer-reviewed academic literature
- A transparent PRISMA process showing how studies were identified and selected
- Synthesis of the main findings, rather than a list of separate studies
- Conclusions that follow from the evidence presented

**Clear • evidence-based • accessible**

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# A clear structure helps the audience follow the argument

1. Title + authors
2. Background
3. Aim(s)
4. Search strategy / PRISMA
5. Key findings
6. Discussion
7. Conclusions
8. References

**The sections can look different but should remain logical.**

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# The poster develops through a sequence of decisions

1 **Focus the topic** › 2 **Search the literature** › 3 **Screen with PRISMA** › 4 **Synthesize findings** › 5 **Design the poster** › 6 **Rehearse and refine**

**Good design comes after you understand the evidence and the message**

# PRISMA makes the literature search visible

## Webinar 2 will take you through the process in detail

Records identified

↓

Duplicates removed

↓

Titles and abstracts screened

↓

Full texts assessed

↓

**Studies included**

**TRANSPARENCY**

Shows where you searched, how many records you found and why papers were excluded.

**CREDIBILITY**

Demonstrates that study selection followed a systematic, reproducible process.

**PRISMA records your decisions. It does not replace critical thinking.**

# Six criteria cover the poster, delivery and questions

## PRESENTATION

1 Visual design and accessibility

2 Clear and logical layout

## CONTENT + DELIVERY

3 Content, depth and data

4 Audibility, pace, fluency and focus

5 Knowledge and critical understanding

## QUESTIONS

6 Relevance, accuracy and quality of responses

**Each criterion is scored from 1 to 10 based on what can be observed**

# Visual design and flow

**The audience should understand the route through the poster without explanation.**

## ASSESSORS LOOK FOR

Readable text and relevant, high-quality visuals. A logical layout should guide the eye and make the key message clear.

## MOVING TOWARDS EXCELLENCE

Text, images and layout work together exceptionally well. Information flows seamlessly and the message is immediately clear.

**Any questions at this point?**

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# Content, depth and data presentation

| Satisfactory | Good | Excellent |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relevant content with adequate depth. Data support understanding. | Appropriate depth with clear, accurate presentation of evidence and data. | Comprehensive, insightful coverage. Data enhance the message and remain easy to interpret. |

**Depth means selecting, connecting and interpreting evidence, not adding more words.**

# Delivery and understanding

The spoken presentation should add meaning rather than repeat the poster.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Audibility + pace** | Speak clearly, remain within the expected time and keep the explanation focused. |
| **Fluency** | Use the poster as a prompt. Avoid reading full sentences from the poster or a script. |
| **Understanding** | Explain the evidence, context and findings in your own words. |
| **Discussion** | Make space for the audience and respond confidently when points need clarification. |

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# Questions test ownership of the work

## A strong response

- Answers the question directly
- Uses accurate evidence
- Explains reasoning clearly
- Acknowledges limits when appropriate

## A useful response structure

1. **Answer**
2. **Support with evidence**
3. **Link back to the topic**

# Common mistakes in the poster

### Too much text

Dense paragraphs force the audience to read rather than listen.

### Study-by-study description

Separate summaries hide the overall pattern in the evidence.

### Weak search trail

Missing databases, criteria or PRISMA figures reduce transparency.

### Decoration without purpose

Images that do not explain evidence use valuable space.

### Unclear hierarchy

Equal emphasis everywhere makes the central message difficult to find.

### Unsupported conclusion

Claims extend beyond the evidence shown on the poster.

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# Common mistakes in delivery and teamwork

### READING A SCRIPT

Reduces eye contact, weakens fluency and makes it harder to respond naturally.

### POOR HANDOVERS

Repeated points, interruptions or unclear transitions disrupt the flow of the explanation.

### UNEQUAL OWNERSHIP

Knowing only one section leaves the group vulnerable during questions.

**Rehearse as a group, then rehearse again with questions.**

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# What helps this poster communicate effectively?

Use criteria 1 and 2: visual design, accessibility, layout and flow.

## Advancements in Unmanned Naval Systems

AND HOW THEY ENABLE HYBRID WARFARE TODAY

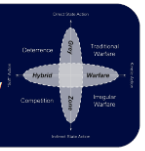
Contributors
Sherwood R., Martin A., Coe L., Charles M., Fretwell A., Joanna B., Dowthwaite E., Losinski T., McCulloch T.

### ABSTRACT

Unmanned naval systems - namely Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs) and Unmanned Surface Vessels (USVs) - underpin the Black Sea theatre the Russo-Ukrainian War. While these technologies have existed for decades, their widespread military use is more recent, where they have seen use as part of the wider hybrid conflict. This literature review seeks to identify the key technological enablers that have allowed naval drones to conduct hybrid warfare, and provide recommendations on their future use.

### INTRODUCTION

***Hybrid Warfare:***
- The coordinated use of traditional and non-traditional military action to achieve strategic military to political objectives.
- Conducting offensive operations that fall below the threshold for a conventional military response by the opposing force, allowing for early intervention and plausible deniability.




***Maritime Hybrid Warfare in the Ukrainian conflict:***
- Ukrainian naval drones are the cornerstone of the AFU's A2/AD network in the Black Sea, pushing the Russian fleet out of Sevastopol.
- Russian autonomous systems interfere with Western states supporting Ukraine's war effort, with actions that fall below the threshold for conventional response.

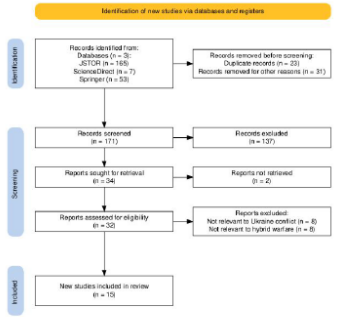


***A Technology Centred Conflict:***
- The employment of new technological enablers, often from civilian industry, has rapidly changed Ukrainian and Russian force structures.
- Naval drones are emerging as a key feature of maritime hybrid warfare that forces around the world should expect to encounter in an increasingly tumultuous future.



### METHOD

For this literature review on how emerging technology has facilitated naval drones as enablers of hybrid warfare, the PRISMA method was employed. A flowchart demonstrating this has been included below:




- Keywords included "Naval Drones" AND "Hybrid Warfare"
- Reports were excluded if:
  - Predated 2022
  - Did not originate from military institution / literature
  - Were not relevant to Ukraine conflict or hybrid warfare
- Three reviewers read over articles independently
- 15 studies finalised this review

### REFERENCES


- Bergeron, J. (2023) *'Maritime NATO After the Russian Invasion of Ukraine'*, Atlantisch Perspectief, 47(4), pp. 34–38.
- Habib, M. T., Shamrir Al Af, S. M. (2025) 'Maritime asymmetric warfare strategy for smaller states: lessons from Ukraine', Small Wars & Insurgencies, 36(1), pp. 29–58.
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- Burrell, R. (2023) *'A Full Spectrum of Conflict Design: How Doctrine Should Embrace Irregular Warfare'*, Irregular Warfare Initiative.


### DISCUSSION

*Key technological enablers with case studies from the Russo-Ukrainian War are provided below:*

***LEO Communication Satellite Constellations***
- Constellations of satellites in LEO require much smaller terminals and provides much higher bandwidth
- Real-time control 800 km away from control station
- The Ukrainian *Magura v5* and Russian *Murena 300S* use such systems



***Multi-mission USV configuration***
- Ukrainian USVs are built around the 1-way attack profile
- Flexible platforms allow for modifications to aid this mission, namely *rockets* and *IR missiles*, and *FPV drones*



***Improved UUV Communication and Autonomy***
- Improved communication reduces dependence on tether, increasing independence, range, and autonomy
- Russia is developing the *ANGAPP* among other UUVs for seabed operations



### CONCLUSIONS

- Unmanned systems are becoming increasingly central to maritime conflicts, and can be used to conduct or defend against hybrid attacks on critical national infrastructure
- Much of the recent military success of unmanned systems in Ukraine stems from recent technological developments in civilian fields, rapidly adapted to military capability
- Western / NATO forces must adapt to counter future hybrid threats that will stem from the proliferation of naval drones

## What are your thoughts:

- Where does your eye go first?
- Can you follow the reading order?
- Which visuals help understanding?
- What would you borrow for your own poster?

# Advancements in Unmanned Naval Systems

## AND HOW THEY ENABLE HYBRID WARFARE TODAY


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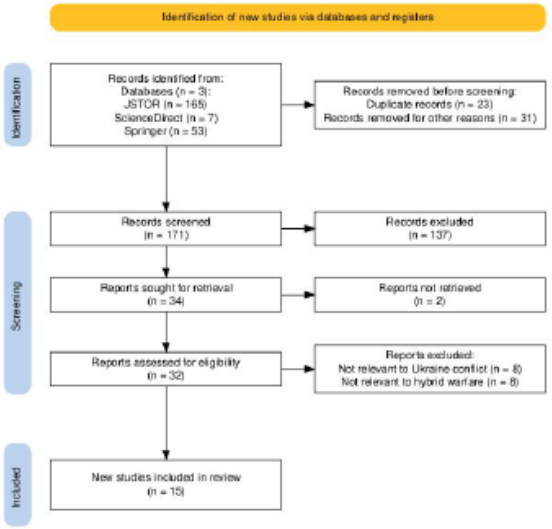
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# Move beyond appearance: where is the evidence?

**Can you identify the:**

- Research focus
- The search or selection process
- The conclusion supported by evidence
- What would be one question you would ask the presenters?

# Societal Resilience and a Return To National Service


## AUTHORS

Toby Batchelor, Aaron McKay, Adrianne Meagher, Kailas Patel, William Rochford, Annabel Scoggins, Freya Stephens.



## ABSTRACT

The poster explores how the changing security environment in Europe in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine has fostered a move by many European governments towards military training for young people as a means to building more resilient societies. We will discuss how the war in Ukraine has changed security perceptions across Europe.

Through analysis of the various national policies, we will conclude that European governments seek to strengthen their societal and defensive resilience by providing young people with the benefits of basic military training.


## WHY NATIONAL SERVICE?

- Ukraine War has demonstrated the enduring importance of conventional forces.
- Ukrainian troops receive only 2 months of training before being deployed, less than the 6-9 month NATO avg, this lack of training has resulted in high casualty rates and low morale. [1]
- **National service** can provide a large reserve of trained soldiers which can be called upon, thus avoiding shortages such as those seen in Ukraine. [2]


## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Edinburgh Napier University for facilitating the poster making process. In particular Dr Gerardine Matthews-Smith and Research Fellow and PhD Student Emma Gall for providing valuable insights during the literature review and PRISMA diagram. Final thanks also to the University Air Squadron for providing this opportunity to the named Officer Cadets.


## METHODOLOGY



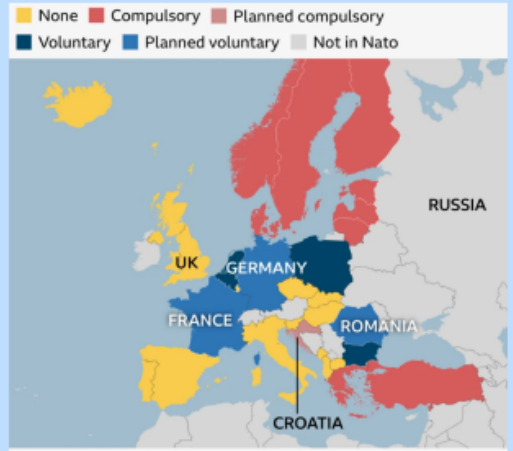
*PRISMA Diagram*

We used the PRISMA method to streamline our review of the existing literature on how **youth participation in the military** contributes to national resilience.

- Keywords included 'National Service', 'Conscription' and 'National Resilience'
- Each team member participated in the reviewing of articles
- Reports were excluded if:
  - They were not from a reliable source
  - They were not relevant to National Resilience
  - They were not considering European security




## ...TO NOW, 2026




Note: Some countries have different rules for men and women

Figure 2

## PUBLIC OPINION

- Figure 1 highlights the increased perception among Europeans of **Russian aggression** and **armed conflicts** as two of the three biggest threats facing the continent [7]
- Magnitude of the threat perception is reflected at the political level, former German Chancellor Olaf Scholz described Russian invasion as a ***'Zeitenwende'*** - a time-shift

## PROPOSED NATIONAL POLICIES

- Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, European states ahave proposed a variety of policies which seek to provide military training to young people.
- Belgium: voluntary **12-month** military service for those aged 18-25 (Begins September 2026).
- Netherlands: voluntary **12-month** military service for those aged 18-27 (Began September 2025).
- France: New **10-month** "National Service" aimed at 18 and 19 (Begins summer 2026).
- Germany: Volunteer Military Service to be introduced, **mandatory military suitability survey for men aged 18**, (Began January 2026). [5]

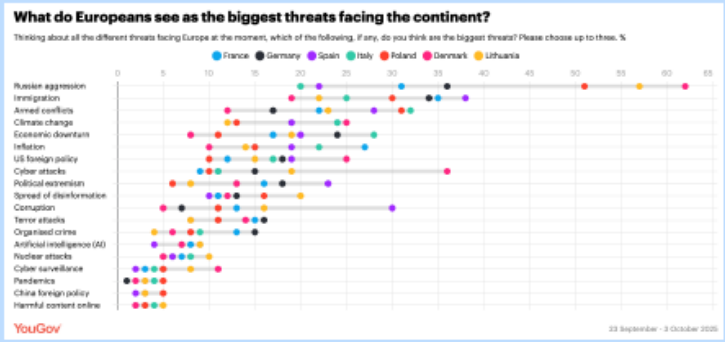



Figure 1

## BENEFITS TO THE INDIVIDUAL

- Advocates of national service highlight that in addition to strengthening national resilience through fostering a highly-trained, **whole society** approach to defence; young people become more resilient themselves through participation in military training
- Research has identified **five components** found in youths deemed to be more resilient than others:

1. **Communication:** the ability to work and build support with others
2. **Cohesion:** Feeling a sense of community and belonging
3. **Comprehension:** Understanding information and applying it to relevant tasks
4. **Crisis Preparedness:** Basic physical and weapons training, more technical skills such as first aid and security protocol
5. **Conflict Resolution and Problem Solving:** Overcoming adversity and dealing with difficulty

- By building resilient individuals, **the argument is that** societies themselves become more prepared to respond to crises and adapt to changing circumstances.

## POTENTIAL DRAWBACKS

- In South Korea, where military service is mandatory for all healthy men above the age of 19, Bethmann and Cho identify a masculine culture which encourages tobacco use and excessive alcohol consumption- creating long-term adverse health outcomes. [3]
- Hubers and Webbink found that compulsory military service in the Netherlands and the UK has resulted in generational reduction in both wages and university attendance. [4]

## BUDGET AGREEMENTS

- At the 2025 Hague Summit, NATO allies committed to spending **5% of GDP** on defence by 2035.
- **1.5 % of GDP** is being committed to "*inter alia* .... ensure civil preparedness and resilience". [6]
- NATO defines civil resilience as:
  - Continuity of government
  - Continuity of essential services to the population
  - Continuity of support to military operations
- As the threat of Russian aggression grows, European NATO members are seeking to build resilient societies capable of repelling an attack.

## CONCLUSION

The security context in Europe has changed. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has forced European nations to once again consider the possibility of a threat to their territory. Furthermore, the war in Ukraine has highlighted the continuing importance of large, trained armies in modern interstate conflict.

Major European states have responded to this changing situation through the promotion of various forms of national service.

Governments envision these policies as carrying dual benefits for building resilient societies; they will ensure the availability of a reserve of trained soldiers who can be called upon for national defence *and* national service can develop skills and resilient qualities in individuals. This second point is key in fostering a whole-society approach wherein resilient individuals contribute to a more resilient whole.

### REFERENCES


[1] Charter, J. and Sparrow, A. (2025). April 10). Ukraine's manpower challenges undermine the hopes now of Israel's Hamas. The Guardian. Retrieved 19 January 2026, from

[2] Ministry of Defence. (2025, December 15). Ukraine's Armed Forces. Gov.uk. Retrieved 19 January 2026, from

[3] Bethmann, S., & Cho, J. (2020). The effect of military service on aggressive and health-risking behavior. Journal of Health Economics, 72, 102328.

[4] Hubers, F., & Webbink, D. (2015). The long-term effects of compulsory military service on educational attainment and wages. Economics of Education Review, 49, 1–14.

[5] Deutsche Welle. (2025, December 2). Germany approves military service reform. DW.com. Retrieved 19 January 2026, from

[6] NATO Press and Media service. (2025, June 25). The Hague Summit Declaration. NATO. Retrieved 19 January 2026, from

[7] YouGov. (2025, October 10). Which security threats are Europeans most concerned about? YouGov. Retrieved 19 January 2026, from

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# Use the rubric before you submit

- ☐ **MESSAGE**
  Can we state the poster's main message in one sentence?
- ☐ **METHOD**
  Can another person understand how studies were selected?
- ☐ **DELIVERY**
  Can we explain the poster without reading it?
- ☐ **EVIDENCE**
  Does every major claim connect to suitable academic evidence?
- ☐ **FLOW**
  Can the audience follow the poster in the intended order?
- ☐ **QUESTIONS**
  Can every group member defend the main choices and conclusions?

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# What happens next

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| WEBINAR 2 | **Understanding PRISMA** | Literature searching, selecting evidence and building the flow diagram |
| WEBINAR 3 | **Designing an effective poster** | Layout, visual design, teamwork and communication |
| WEBINAR 4 | **Presenting the evidence** | Explaining findings, answering questions and presenting confidently |

**Questions and discussion**

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