

Safeguarding European Airspace and Civilian Resilience: A European Drone Shield

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Vienna, Austria, on 3-4 of July 2026:

Noting that:

- repeated drone incursions into EU and NATO airspace demonstrate the vulnerability of the Union's external borders;
- in May–June 2026, multiple drone incidents across Finland, Lithuania, Romania, and Latvia disrupted airspace, triggered alerts, damaged infrastructure and injured civilians, demonstrating direct consequences for everyday life;
- these incidents reflect a broader pattern of Russia-linked military and hybrid activities aimed at dividing and destabilising Europe, often involving unclear attribution, electronic interference, creating strategic uncertainty;
- recent drone incidents have exposed shortcomings in managing civilian consequences.

Recognising that:

- the EU has begun responding via the *Defence Roadmap 2030*, launching the European Drone Defence Initiative and Eastern Flank Watch, with initial capability planned by end-2026;
- Europe's defence systems are outdated and interception methods are economically unsustainable (high-cost missiles vs low-cost drones);
- a comprehensive defence system requires a coordinated European approach, significant, long-term EU investment and interoperability between Member States;
- bordering Member States have called for stronger counter-drone capabilities, surveillance, and EU coordination;
- improved detection and coordination can prevent isolated drone incidents from escalating into wider crises;
- there is a need to strengthen civil preparedness and coordination between authorities, regulators, emergency services, and defence actors;
- while EU counterdrone efforts are advancing, civilian, legal, and crisismanagement aspects remain underdeveloped.

Calls for:

- rapid deployment of the European Drone Defence Initiative and creation of an EU-funded Drone Shield along the eastern border;
- strong, sustained funding for interoperable European air and drone defence systems and investment in European drone and counterdrone technologies to strengthen strategic autonomy;
- a clear EU framework for responding to drone incursions, including rules on attribution, escalation management, and strong provisions for civilian protection, crisis response, and continuity of daily life;
- integration of Ukraine's battlefield expertise and data into European planning, training and procurement;
- clear coordination between military counterdrone measures and the protection of civilian airspace and critical infrastructure.