

## The Hellenic Navy's Modernization Plan

The Hellenic Navy Modernization Plan, part of the implementation of the "Agenda 2030" program, is focused on upgrading its surface fleet, submarines, helicopters, and maritime patrol aircraft, with the goal of completing this initiative by 2030.

The modernization of its surface fleet program includes the following three key components:

1. **Acquiring New Vessels:** Introducing advanced surface ships to bolster the fleet's operational capabilities and strengthen the country's maritime defense and dominance.
2. **Upgrading Existing Vessels:** Modernizing current assets to extend their operational life and enhance combat readiness, especially considering evolving technological demands.
3. **Investing in Local Shipbuilding:** Supporting and revitalizing Greece's shipbuilding industry, including infrastructure improvements, fostering local expertise, and creating jobs in maritime sectors to drive economic growth and sustain long-term defense capabilities.

Minister of National Defence Nikos Dendias announced Greece's intention to initiate negotiations for the acquisition of a fourth Belharra-type frigate, advancing a comprehensive modernization program for the Hellenic Navy's fleet.

Speaking at the Naval Group shipyards in Lorient, France, during the launching ceremony for the Nearchos frigate, Dendias stated that the shipbuilding program for the four Belharra frigates, along with modernization projects for the MEKO frigates, Roussen-class missile boats, and submarines, as well as the acquisition of four Island-class patrol boats, is creating an "impregnable surface wall" in the Aegean. He also noted that this "wall" will be further strengthened by Greece's planned involvement in the design and future construction of the new Constellation-class frigate and participation in the European corvette program.

This comprehensive approach aims to modernize the fleet while ensuring versatility, operational readiness, and cost-effectiveness in line with the Hellenic Navy's strategic goals.

### FDI HN Frigates

On March 24, 2022, Greece and Naval Group signed the contracts for three defence and intervention frigates, plus one optional, and their in-service support. Two FDI HN (Hellenic Navy) will be delivered in 2025 and the third one in 2026. The acquisition of Frégate de Défense et d'Intervention (FDI) frigates will enhance the HN's capabilities with advanced technology and improved operational flexibility.

The FDI HN will be a power and sovereignty asset for Greece. Fitted with up to 32 ASTER missiles or with a combination of ASTER and MICA NG missiles, 21 RAM, 8 Exocet MM 40 B 3, MU 90 lightweight torpedoes and 76 mm gun, she offers unrivalled capabilities for the permanent control of air and sea space and autonomy of



	Name	Laid down	Launched	Commissioned
<b>F-601</b>	<b>Kimon</b>	21 October 2022	4 October 2023	Early 2025
<b>F-602</b>	<b>Nearchos</b>	late 2023	19 September 2024	Late 2025
<b>F-603</b>	<b>Formion</b>	15 April 2024		early 2026

action, in support of the political and military objectives set. Like all Naval Group frigates, the FDI HN will be fully interoperable with NATO and EU Navies' fleets. She will be capable of assuming all multimission roles within any kind of allied fleet and within the HN fleet.

The FDI HN is a compendium of the best technologies from the European defence industries Thales, MBDA and Naval Group. The Aster missiles onboard can be engaged very quickly in all directions and ensure an unmatched hit-to-kill capability, making it possible to defeat saturating attacks.

The FDI frigate has been designed to be equipped as growth potential with Naval Cruise Missiles, a Deep Strike capability unique in the market proposed by Naval Group and able to deal with the latest threats. The physical and digital infrastructures of the FDI guarantee an evolutionary potential that will ensure that the Hellenic Navy will be able to deal with emerging and future threats over the life of the ship (UAVs, Cyber, anti-ship ballistic missiles, hypersonic missiles, stealth threats underwater or above water, etc).

### New Corvette

The Hellenic Navy is actively pursuing the acquisition of 3+1 corvettes, exploring several promising options to enhance its fleet. Italy, France, and the Netherlands have submitted proposals to supply new corvettes. The proposals under consideration include Fincantieri's FCX corvette, Naval Group's Gowind-class corvette, and Damen's SIGMA 10514 multi-role corvette from the Netherlands while Israel shipyards has introduced the Themistocles-class corvette at DEFEA 2021

#### Key Aspects of the Corvettes Acquisition Plan:

**Local Construction:** A significant aspect of this initiative is Greece's commitment to having at least two of the corvettes constructed in domestic shipyards, such as Elefsis (ONEX Shipyards) and Skaramangas Shipyards (Hellenic Shipyards).

**Evolving Requirements:** The Hellenic Navy is facing challenges in defining its operational requirements due to rapidly changing geopolitical circumstances. Recent conflicts in regions like Ukraine, Israel, and the Red Sea have underscored the importance of adapting to new threats.

The HN has pointed out the operational requirements and obtain competitive quotes.

**PESCO Participation:** Greece is a full member of the PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) project for the European Patrol Corvette (EPC), which signifies its commitment to enhancing European defense capabilities through collaborative programs.

The Hellenic Navy's focus on acquiring modern corvettes reflects its strategic intent to adapt to contemporary maritime challenges while fostering local shipbuilding initiatives. The ongoing evaluation process aims to ensure that the new vessels will effectively support the Navy's operational goals in an increasingly complex security environment.

### Constellation-Class Frigates

The GMinister of National Defence, Nikolaos Dendias, has announced Greece's ambitious plan to co-produce up to seven Constellation-class frigates in collaboration with the United States. This initiative underscores Greece's commitment to enhancing its naval strength through advanced capabilities and local manufacturing.

The announcement followed the receipt of a letter from U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. This letter not only endorsed Greece's strategic naval development but also included approval for the allocation of four Freedom-class Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) as part of a broader equipment support package. Greece's interest was formally acknowledged by the U.S. Navy through a letter of acceptance on January 16, 2024, which has paved the way for joint design and production efforts in Greek shipyards. This cooperation with the U.S. is seen as a significant milestone, reflecting Greece's strategic focus on advancing its defense infrastructure and expanding its naval capabilities.

The HN plans to establish local production capabilities for Constellation-class frigates, ensuring that the design can be tailored to meet its operational requirements. This move will also support regional defense partnerships. To facilitate this goal, the Hellenic MOD is developing a **Foreign Military Sales (FMS)** planning case. This will help define the necessary capabilities of Greek shipyards and how the frigate design can be adapted for local needs.

The HN anticipates that if all goes according to plan, local production of the Constellation-class frigates could begin by **mid-2030**. This timeline reflects a commitment to developing both the necessary infrastructure and expertise within Greece.

The initiative to acquire and co-produce Constellation-class frigates represents a strategic move for the Hellenic Navy, aimed at strengthening its defense capabilities and fostering regional cooperation. With a focus on local production and interoperability, the HN is positioning itself to meet future maritime challenges while enhancing its role within NATO and European defense frameworks.

### Hydra MLU Program

The Hellenic Navy has initiated a modernization program for its four MEKO® 200 HN frigates, which have been in service since the mid-1990s, aiming to extend their operational lifespan through a mid-life upgrade. The original equipment manufacturers, thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) and Thales, have formed a consortium to manage the upgrade process, marking a significant collaboration to enhance Greece's naval capabilities.

**Hydra-class upgrade program** aimed at modernizing the Hellenic Navy's four **Hydra-class frigates**, which have been in service for around 30 years. The key objectives and details of this modernization initiative are as follows:

The primary goal is to extend the operational life of the Hydra-class frigates by at least 15 years. This will ensure that the vessels remain relevant and capable in contemporary naval operations. The modernization will involve upgrading or installing new equipment to address

issues of obsolescence in the current systems. This includes enhancing combat systems, sensors, and other critical technologies to improve overall performance.

The HN is currently in discussions with the TKMS (ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems) and Thales to finalize the details of the upgrade program. The Hydra MLU Program represents a significant investment in the Hellenic Navy's capabilities, focusing on extending the service life and modernizing aging vessels.

### Fast Attack Craft Modernization and Acquisition Plans

#### Roussen-Class Mid-Life Upgrade (MLU):

The Roussen (Super Vita) class FACMs, with the first vessel entering service in 2005, are in need of a Mid-Life Upgrade (MLU). Most of their equipment was originally designed in the late 1990s, although the last pair of vessels feature more modern systems. The MLU will involve equipping the seven Roussen-class boats with state-of-the-art sensors and systems. This modernization aims to maximize their operational capabilities and address existing obsolescence issues. The study for the MLU is currently under approval, indicating progress toward enhancing the fleet's effectiveness.

#### Future Acquisition Plans:

The HN is considering the procurement of up to nine new FACMs to gradually replace its aging fleet, which includes four Laskos-class and five Kavaloudis-class. The goal is to maintain a force of 16 FACMs overall, ensuring that the Hellenic Navy can effectively respond to maritime threats.



The Hellenic Navy's focus on modernizing its Fast Attack Craft fleet through the Roussen-class MLU and the planned acquisition of new vessels reflects a commitment to maintaining a capable and responsive naval force. As these initiatives progress, the HN aims to enhance its operational readiness and ensure effective maritime security in a changing geopolitical landscape.

## Patrol Boats Modernization and Acquisition Plans

- **Island-Class Vessels:**

Georgios Galanis (P198), an Island-class coastal patrol vessel, is currently undergoing refurbishment and modernization at Salamis Shipyards. Four Island-class vessels are already in the repair and upgrade process, reflecting the Navy's commitment to enhancing its operational capabilities.

All upgraded vessels will receive modern equipment, including advanced weapon systems. Specifically, the Island-class vessels will be equipped with the LIONFISH 20 Remote Weapon Station (RWS). Additionally, new communications systems and electro-optical sensors from Miltech Hellas will be integrated to improve situational awareness and operational efficiency.

### Future Procurement Plans:

The Hellenic Navy is developing FMS cases for the procurement of:

- Three Protector-class vessels
- Two additional Island-class vessels

The Hellenic Navy's modernization and procurement efforts for patrol boats underscore its commitment to maintaining effective coastal security. Through the upgrade of existing Island-class vessels and the planned acquisition of Protector-class and additional Island-class vessels, the Navy aims to enhance its operational capabilities and readiness to address emerging maritime challenges.

The Agenor SOC, domestically designed to meet the operational requirement of the Hellenic Navy's Underwater Demolition Command, exemplifies the Hellenic Navy's commitment to developing capabilities that meet specific operational needs while fostering domestic shipbuilding. Its potential adaptation into a USV further illustrates the Navy's forward-thinking approach to modern maritime challenges, ensuring that Greece remains agile and responsive in its special operations capabilities.

## Submarines

### Overview of the Hellenic Navy's Submarine Fleet:

The Hellenic Navy (HN) operates a modern submarine fleet comprising 11 units, including the advanced Type 214 Papanikolis-class submarines and a flotilla of Type 209 submarines. Each class offers distinct capabilities,

providing Greece with a versatile and capable undersea force.

The Type 214 Papanikolis class represents the most advanced submarines in the Hellenic Navy. Developed by German HDW, these submarines are powered by a diesel-electric propulsion system with an air-independent propulsion (AIP) system using Siemens proton-exchange membrane (PEM) fuel cells, allowing prolonged submerged operations. The Type 214 is derived from the German Type 212, though it utilizes HY-100 steel in the hull for greater diving depth and durability.

The Hellenic Navy also operates seven Type 209 submarines across two variants: Glavkos-class (Type 209/1100) and Poseidon-class (Type 209/1200). Originally designed for export by HDW, the Type 209 models have served Greece for decades, with multiple modernization programs enhancing their capabilities.

**Glavkos-Class (Type 209/1100):** The first of Greece's Type 209 submarines, commissioned between 1971-1973, underwent significant upgrades under the "Neptune I" modernization program, including electronics enhancements and the integration of UGM-84 Harpoon missiles.

**Poseidon-Class (Type 209/1200) and Neptune II Upgrade:** Ordered in the late 1970s, the Poseidon-class underwent further modernization in the "Neptune II" program, with HS Okeanos (S-118) receiving an AIP module and additional advanced systems, classifying it as Type 209/1500.

On Thursday, 19 September 2024, the Minister of National Defence Nikos Dendias during the launching ceremony of Frigate "NEARCHOS" referring to the Hellenic Navy's modernization program announced the launch of negotiations for the acquisition of four new submarines.

## Helicopters

On 20 March 2024, the Hellenic Navy officially welcomed the first three of the total seven ordered new MH-60R SEAHAWK® helicopters into its fleet during a ceremony held at Naval Air Station Kotroni-Marathonas. This significant addition was attended by officials from Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company, along with representatives from the Hellenic Armed Forces and the Greek Government, including Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

Hamid Salim, Vice President of Sikorsky Maritime Systems, highlighted the advanced capabilities of the MH-60R variant, noting its integrated mission systems and sensors that enhance the Navy's anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare capabilities. These helicopters will enable aircrews to locate and prioritize targets, a vital component for modern naval operations.

The newly acquired helicopters arrived in Greece on U.S. Navy transport planes and had previously undergone rigorous flight testing in the United States. These aircraft are set to join the existing fleet of S-70B/B-6 SEAHAWK helicopters, known as "Aegean Hawks," acquired between 1994 and 2005. The Hellenic Navy's fleet expansion will continue with the arrival of four additional MH-60R helicopters in 2025, completing the planned purchase of seven units. The MH-60R helicopters, built to

U.S. Navy specifications, now integrate Greece into a global SEAHAWK network of over 580 MH-60R and MH-60S helicopters operated worldwide, with ongoing support from Sikorsky and the U.S. Navy.

## Hellenic Navy P-3B maritime patrol aircraft mid-life upgrade and modernization program

On 7 October 2014 the State Department has made a determination approving a possible Foreign Military Sale to Greece for P-3B aircraft overhaul and upgrade as well as associated equipment, parts, training and logistical support for an estimated cost of \$500 million.

The Government of Greece has requested a possible sale for modification and reactivation of two (2) P-3B aircraft, and the upgrade of up to five (5) P-3B aircraft that will include structural Mid Life Upgrades (MLU), Phased Depot Maintenance (PDM), Mission Integration and Management Systems (MIMS), and new flight avionics. The MLU kits will provide service life extensions for 15,000 flight hours, spare and repair parts, repair and return, support equipment, publications and technical documentation, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. Government and contractor logistics, engineering, and technical support services, and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated cost was \$500 million.



On 17 May 2019, representatives from the Hellenic Navy, Lockheed Martin and Hellenic Aerospace Industry (HAI) hosted a ceremony at HAI's facility near Athens, Greece, for the delivery of the first P-3B maritime patrol aircraft (interim solution aircraft) as part of the Hellenic Navy P-3B maritime patrol aircraft mid-life upgrade and modernization program implementation. On October 2024 a case file submitted in the Hellenic Parliament for investigating potential scandal involving the \$500 million signed contract regarding the middle life upgrade program of the Hellenic Navy's P-3B maritime patrol aircraft. The case concerns the non-implementation of a contract for the upgrade of specific aircraft, agreed upon in March 2015 by the SYRIZA government, which remains unfulfilled.

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