

13 April 2026

Rheinmetall and Destinus to form a joint venture for missiles

The Düsseldorf-based technology group Rheinmetall and Destinus, a Netherlands-based European defence technology company focused on scalable strike and interception systems, have agreed to establish a joint venture. The aim of the two partners is to set up the joint venture, to be named Rheinmetall Destinus Strike Systems, during the second half of 2026. It will manufacture, market, and deliver advanced missile systems. These will include cruise missiles and ballistic rocket

artillery. Rheinmetall will hold a 51 percent stake, while Destinus will hold the remaining 49 percent. The transaction is subject to regulatory approvals.

As part of the partnership, Rheinmetall and Destinus intend to exploit market opportunities and further develop modern missile

systems. Within agreed markets and under applicable approvals, they intend to provide innovative solutions for cruise missiles and ballistic rocket artillery, and to strengthen existing product portfolios.

Destinus remains headquartered in the Netherlands and will continue to develop and manufacture core systems and components across its Dutch and broader European footprint. The joint venture adds Germany-based qualification and serial production capacity within Rheinmetall's industrial facilities.

Armin Papperger, the CEO of Rheinmetall, said: "We must expand the industrial base for modern defence systems in Europe. This joint venture reflects this necessity. We are combining Rheinmetall's production capacities and experience in managing large-scale programs with Destinus's specific technology and system design. By doing so, we are laying the foundations for scalable, operational missiles that are tailored to the current requirements of the European and allied armed forces."

"Europe is entering a new phase of scaling missile production," added Mikhail Kokorich, co-founder and CEO of Destinus. "Modern conflict is defined by volume and cost-per-effect. Missile systems are evolving from limited-production assets into industrial products. The real constraint in Europe today is not demand, but industrial capacity."



► Key facts

- Rheinmetall and Destinus plan to establish a joint venture called 'Rheinmetall Destinus Strike Systems' in 2026
- The company will specialise in the production of advanced cruise missiles and ballistic rocket artillery
- The Company will be based in Unterlüß, Lower Saxony

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Recent conflicts, including in Ukraine and the Middle East, have demonstrated that demand for scalable strike systems is no longer measured in limited batches. Instead, there is an increasing demand for thousands of systems per year, which could grow to tens of thousands over time as European and allied procurement adapts. This translates into a market opportunity of hundreds of millions of euros annually in the near term, with the potential to reach the low billions over time.

This partnership combines Destinus' battle-proven system architecture, product design, and scalable platform development, including systems already operationally validated and used in Ukraine, with Rheinmetall's industrial scale, qualification capabilities, and manufacturing execution as the leading German defence company. Destinus develops and manufactures cruise missile systems and turbojet engines, with an established serial production program in Europe, currently producing over 2,000 cruise missile systems a year. Rheinmetall brings many years of experience in developing and producing complex defence systems, an industrial presence in Germany, and extensive ongoing investment in independent, scalable defence production. Together, the partners will add Germany-based industrial capacity for serial production and qualification, supporting European sovereignty objectives and allied requirements.

The joint venture will focus on manufacturing, assembling, testing, and delivering advanced cruise missile systems to accelerate the delivery of a missile system specifically developed for this purpose, meeting the requirements of national and international customers.

The joint venture will target a broad international market in Europe, as well as selected partner countries within the NATO alliance. For individual key markets, the involvement of local industrial partners may be considered. Both companies will contribute their regional expertise and market knowledge to define suitable sales structures and drive sustainable growth in relevant market segments.

This initiative reflects a broader shift in modern warfare, with long-range strike capabilities evolving from predominantly drone-based approaches toward faster, more resilient, and industrially scalable cruise missile systems. With this joint venture, Rheinmetall and Destinus aim to bridge the gap between what Europe and Ukraine require and what Europe's defence industry can deliver, at volume and at industrial tempo.