

MARTIN HEREM

Estonian Minister of Defence



Martin Herem is the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Estonia since 16 September 2026. Prior to his appointment as Minister of Defence, Herem worked as a military adviser to defence industry companies in 2024–2026.

Herem has held several senior positions in the Estonian Defence Forces. In 2018–2024, he served as Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces. Prior to that, in 2016–2018, he was Chief of Staff of the Headquarters of the Estonian Defence Forces, and in 2013–2016, he served as Commandant of the Estonian Military Academy. In 2008–2012, Herem was Commander of the North-Eastern Defence District. Earlier in his military career, in 1996–2007, he served in the Estonian Defence Forces as a platoon commander, company commander and staff officer.

Herem graduated from the Estonian National Defence College, specialising in military leadership in the Land Forces, and obtained a Master's degree in Military Science in 2012. He has also completed the Higher Command Studies Course at the Baltic Defence College. In addition to his professional career, during the 2026/2027 academic year, Herem is a Visiting Professor at the University of Tartu.

Herem has received several Estonian and international decorations. In 2024, he was awarded the Order of the Cross of the Eagle, First Class, and the Ministry of Defence Cross of Merit, First Class. In 2023, he received the Order of Viesturs of Latvia, First Class, and in 2021, he was appointed Commander of the Legion of Honour of the French Republic. In 2018, he was awarded the Order of the Cross of the Eagle, Second Class, and in 2012, the Ministry of Defence Cross of Merit, Third Class.

Martin Herem was born on 17 December 1973. He is married and has three children. His native language is Estonian, and he also speaks English and Russian.