

# NATO's June 2025 Summit in The Hague

June 18, 2025

Heads of state and government from the 32 member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are scheduled to meet in The Hague, the Netherlands, on [June 24-26, 2025](#). According to NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, “[the core deliverable](#)” of the Hague Summit will be an allied commitment to significantly increase defense spending to build a “[stronger, fairer, and more lethal Alliance](#).”

The Hague Summit is to be the first NATO summit since President Donald Trump took office in January 2025. Some allied governments [have questioned](#) how U.S. policy toward the alliance might evolve under the Trump Administration. Administration officials [have stressed](#) that the United States remains a committed, active NATO member and [have urged](#) allies to increase defense investments to strengthen the alliance.

Congress was instrumental in creating NATO in 1949—including through Senate ratification of NATO's founding North Atlantic Treaty—and has played a role in shaping U.S. policy toward the alliance ever since. NATO-related issues of ongoing interest to Members of Congress could include allied defense spending, the future of U.S. and NATO force posture in Europe, NATO relations with Ukraine, and NATO's policies toward Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC).

## Renewed Focus on Defense Spending

Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine added urgency to longer-standing NATO efforts to increase allies' defense spending and investment. Secretary General Rutte has called for a “[quantum leap](#)” in NATO's defense capabilities in response to the security threat posed by Russia, which he maintains could be ready to use military force against NATO in five years, and the PRC's military modernization, among other potential threats.

In 2014, the allies adopted the so-called Wales [Defense Investment Pledge](#), under which they committed to “[aim to move towards](#)” defense spending of at least 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2024 and to devote at least 20% of defense spending to procurement and modernization. NATO estimates that [23 allies](#) met the 2% of GDP benchmark in 2024, compared with 3 in 2014 (see [Figure 1](#)), and that [29 NATO allies](#) met the 20% procurement and modernization target. In May 2025, Secretary General Rutte [said](#) “almost all Allies, hopefully all, Allies will be at 2% before [the June 2025 Hague Summit].”

Secretary General Rutte has said [he expects](#) allies at the summit to commit to reach defense-related spending of 5% of GDP by 2032. Under Rutte's proposal, the 5% commitment—a [stated priority](#) of

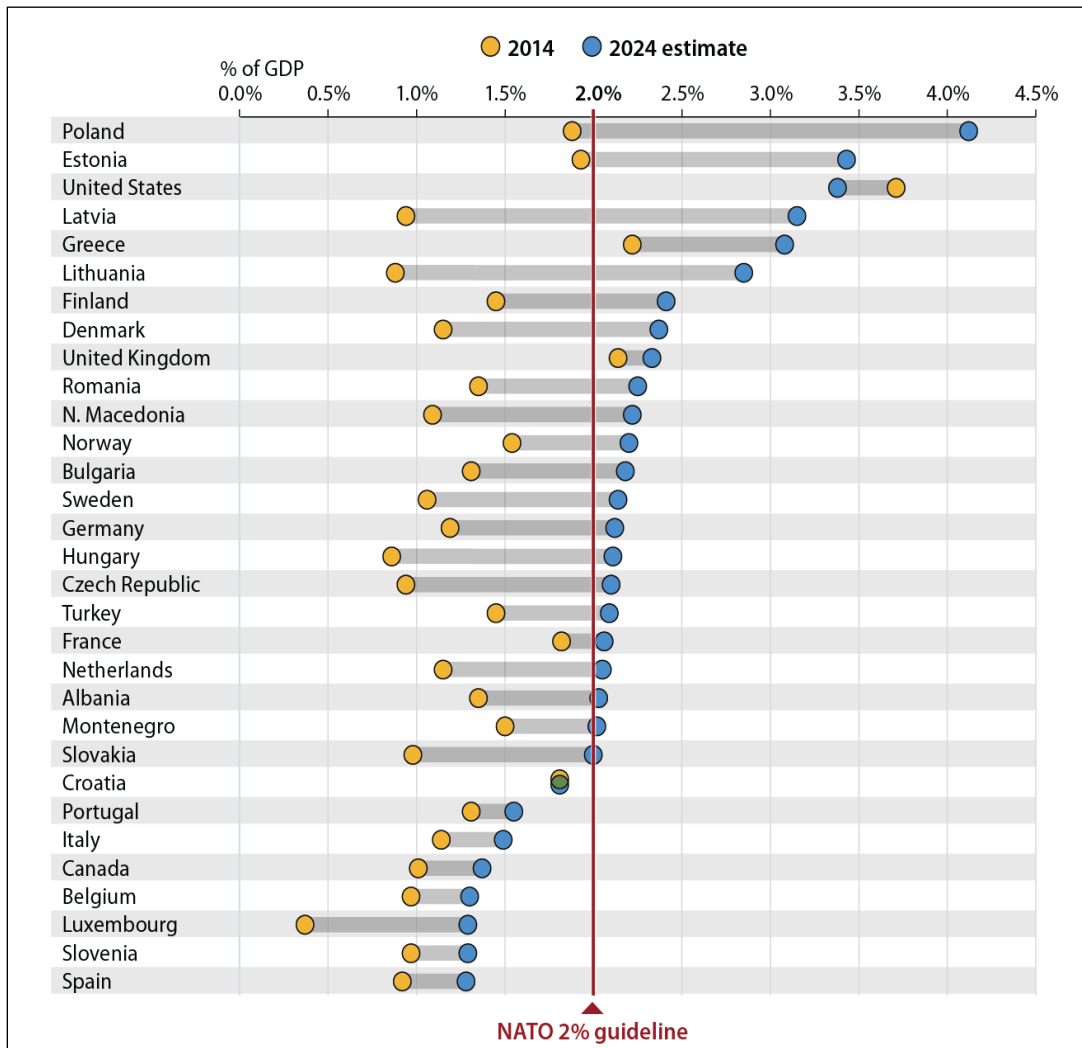
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President Trump—would encompass 3.5% of GDP on “core military requirements” and 1.5% of GDP on defense-related expenditures, including relevant infrastructure and building defense industrial capacity. In The Hague, Rutte also expects the allies to endorse “capability targets” to guide the new defense investments, including a 400% increase in air and missile defense capabilities.

**Figure I. Progress on Meeting NATO's 2% of GDP Defense Spending Guideline**



**Source:** Figure created by CRS based on data from NATO, “Defense Expenditures of NATO Countries,” June 17, 2024.

**Note:** Figure does not include NATO ally Iceland, which does not have armed forces.

## U.S. Policy and Considerations for Congress

A top Trump Administration priority at NATO has been to urge European allies and Canada to increase defense spending and investment. According to Secretary of State Marco Rubio, “[the Administration wants] NATO to be stronger. We want NATO to be more viable. And the only way NATO can get stronger and more viable is if our partners ... have more capability.... [President Trump is] not against NATO. He is against a NATO that does not have the capability that it needs to fulfill the obligations that [the North Atlantic Treaty] imposes upon each and every member-state.”

As Congress conducts oversight of Administration policy toward NATO, a number of related issues could be of continued interest, including the following:

- **Allied Defense Spending.** Throughout NATO's history, Congress has urged European allies and Canada to increase defense spending. Some Members have suggested that allied defense spending levels could influence congressional deliberations over potential future U.S. security commitments in Europe.
- **The Future of U.S. and NATO Force Posture in Europe.** Over the past decade, NATO has reoriented its collective defense posture in Europe to respond to the threat from Russia. Questions remain about whether NATO's current force posture would be adequate to deter or defend against a possible Russian military attack and the U.S. role in such a response.
- **Russia's War Against Ukraine.** Since 2022, NATO has sought to institutionalize long-term allied support for Ukraine and pledged to advance Ukraine's prospects for NATO membership. Allied and congressional views on both issues could factor into congressional consideration of potential longer-term support for Ukraine.
- **People's Republic of China.** As Congress pursues policy responses to strategic competition with and security threats from the PRC, Members may seek to engage with NATO and its member states on NATO strategy toward the PRC and the Indo-Pacific region. The security ramifications of PRC investments in Europe could be a particular concern.

More broadly, Members of Congress could consider a range of questions related to U.S. leadership of the alliance, including with respect to future U.S. commitments to NATO and European security, allied perceptions of U.S. leadership of NATO, and the costs and benefits of U.S. membership in NATO.

During and after the first Trump Administration, both chambers of Congress passed legislation expressing support for NATO; some Members portrayed such measures as responses to President Trump's criticisms of the alliance. Section 1250A of the FY2024 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 118-31), for example, states that "The President shall not suspend, terminate, denounce, or withdraw the United States from [NATO] ... except by and with the advice and consent of the Senate" and prohibits the use of government funds for such purposes. At the same time, some Members have questioned the value of the United States' historically robust role in European security matters and have credited President Trump's approach to NATO with securing defense spending increases across the alliance.

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