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NATO: Issues for the July 2026 Ankara Summit

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NATO: Issues for the July 2026 Ankara Summit

Heads of state and government from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) 32 members are scheduled to meet for a summit in Ankara, Turkey, on July 7-8, 2026. NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte has outlined three core priorities for the summit: continuing to increase allied defense investment, bolstering transatlantic defense industrial production, and supporting Ukraine. In Ankara, allied leaders also are expected to address President Donald J. Trump's criticisms of NATO and concerns from some NATO members about the impact on NATO political cohesion and alliance credibility. A top Trump Administration priority for NATO has been to urge European allies and Canada to increase defense spending and assume greater responsibility for conventional defense in Europe.

Ahead of the Ankara summit, Secretary General Rutte has highlighted that European allies and Canada collectively have spent an additional \$1.2 trillion on defense over the past decade, with all allied defense budgets reaching or exceeding 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2025. In Ankara, Rutte expects allies to put forward concrete plans to meet NATO's new defense spending target of 5% of GDP on defense- and security-related spending by 2035 (including 3.5% of GDP on core defense requirements and 1.5% of GDP on defense-related expenditures). NATO allies also are expected to announce new initiatives to bolster defense industrial capacity across the alliance and tens of billions of dollars in related new defense contracts.

Another key priority for NATO officials at the Ankara summit is to continue institutionalizing long-term allied support for Ukraine, both from individual allies and from NATO as a whole. Secretary General Rutte has expressed support for Trump Administration-led efforts to negotiate a peace agreement in Ukraine and has emphasized that any peace settlement should ensure Russian President Vladimir Putin never again attempts to invade Ukraine. Some allied governments have expressed concern about perceived diminished U.S. support for Ukraine under the Trump Administration. These concerns have grown as some NATO and European officials report that U.S. military operations against Iran could lead to procurement shortages and delays that may affect assistance to Ukraine.

President Trump's statements criticizing NATO and casting doubt on the alliance's value to the United States have caused some allied governments to question the Administration's commitment to the alliance. President Trump's stated interest in acquiring Greenland—a self-governing part of the Kingdom of Denmark, a founding member of NATO—has exacerbated these concerns for many allies. Administration announcements in 2026 of planned U.S. troop reductions in Europe also have caused officials in some European countries to question U.S. reliability and credibility as an ally. President Trump heightened his public criticisms of NATO in March 2026 as European allies declined his requests to assist in protecting shipping lanes through the Strait of Hormuz during the United States' and Israel's military operations against Iran.

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. 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.

Over the past decade, both chambers of Congress have passed legislation expressing support for NATO. Some Members have portrayed such measures as responses to President Trump's criticisms of the alliance, including concerns that the President could consider withdrawing the United States from NATO. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2024 (P.L. 118-31), for example, would require the president to seek the advice and consent of the Senate before a possible U.S. withdrawal from the alliance. Several provisions of the FY2026 NDAA (P.L. 119-60) seek to expand congressional oversight of U.S. policy toward NATO and European security.

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Overview

Heads of state and government from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) 32 members are scheduled to meet for a summit in Ankara, Turkey, on July 7-8, 2026. NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte has outlined three core priorities for the summit: continuing to increase allied defense investment, bolstering transatlantic defense industrial production, and supporting Ukraine. More broadly, Secretary General Rutte has said he hopes the summit will “breathe life into the concept of NATO 3.0: a stronger Europe in a stronger NATO,” leading to “an alliance that is less dependent on the United States, but in which the United States remains firmly rooted.”¹

In Ankara, allied leaders also are expected to address President Trump's criticisms of NATO and concerns from some NATO members about political cohesion within the alliance and NATO credibility. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who has characterized the Ankara summit as “probably one of the more important leaders' summit[s] in the history of NATO,” has stressed ahead of the summit that “[President Donald J. Trump's] views—frankly, disappointment—at some of our NATO allies and their response to our operations in the Middle East, they are well documented. That will have to be addressed.”²

President Trump's statements suggesting that NATO is a “bad deal” for the United States and that the United States has “never gotten anything” from NATO have caused some allied governments to question the Administration's commitment to the alliance.³ President Trump's stated interest in acquiring Greenland—a self-governing part of the Kingdom of Denmark, a founding member of NATO—and his intensified rhetoric in early 2026 about bringing Greenland under U.S. control exacerbated these concerns for many allied governments.⁴ More recently, Administration announcements of planned U.S. troop reductions in Europe have caused officials in some European countries to question U.S. reliability and credibility as an ally (see “U.S. Force Posture in Europe,” below).⁵

President Trump heightened his criticism of NATO in March 2026 as European allies declined his requests to assist in protecting shipping lanes through the Strait of Hormuz during the United States' and Israel's military operations against Iran (some allies have said they would consider contributing to such efforts after hostilities have ceased; see text box below). Numerous allied

¹ NATO, “Atlantic Council Front Page Conversation with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte,” June 25, 2026. U.S. officials have characterized NATO 1.0 as NATO during the Cold War and NATO 2.0 as NATO after the Cold War. See, for example, U.S. Department of Defense, “Remarks by Secretary of War Pete Hegseth at the 2026 NATO Defense Ministerial in Brussels,” June 18, 2026. The Department of Defense is “using a secondary Department of War designation,” under Executive Order 14347 of September 5, 2025; the Secretary of Defense is using “Secretary of War” as a “secondary” designation under the same executive order.

² Department of State, “Secretary of State Marco Rubio and NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte After Their Meeting,” May 22, 2026.

³ See, for example, World Economic Forum, “Davos 2026: Special Address by Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America,” January 21, 2026; Camille Gijs, “Trump: the EU is ‘Nastier Than China,’” *Politico.eu*, May 12, 2025; “Nicholas Vinocur et al., “Turmoil Churns Below the Surface as Rubio Meets NATO Allies,” *Politico.eu*, April 3, 2025; Trevor Hunnicutt and David Brunnstrom, “Trump: If NATO Members Don't Pay, U.S. Won't Defend Them,” Reuters, March 6, 2025.

⁴ See, for example, Eli Stokols and Diana Nerozzi, “Trump Steps Back from the Brink on Greenland. But the Damage Has Been Done,” *Politico.eu*, January 21, 2026; and Paola Tamma et al., “EU Leaders Fear for U.S. Relationship Despite Trump Climbdown,” *Financial Times*, January 22, 2026; for more on Greenland, see CRS Insight IN12643, *Greenland, Denmark, and U.S. Relations*, by Sarah E. Garding.

⁵ See, for example, Ellen Francis, “NATO Allies Grapple with U.S. Pullback, Confusion over Its Military Plans,” *Washington Post*, May 22, 2026.

governments criticized the Administration for launching strikes against Iran without consulting allies beforehand, and some allies, including Spain, France, and Italy, reportedly restricted U.S. access to their airspace and/or military bases for offensive operations against Iran.⁶ In an April 2026 interview with a United Kingdom (UK) media outlet, President Trump said he was strongly considering pulling the United States out of NATO, partly in response to these allied reactions.⁷ Section 1250A of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (NDAA; P.L. 118-31) states, “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” (see “Issues for Congress,” below). In a June 2026 visit to the White House, NATO Secretary General Rutte reportedly expressed his support for U.S. military operations against Iran and noted that up to 5,000 U.S. military flights launched from bases in Europe during the conflict.⁸

Deliberations Regarding the Strait of Hormuz

Some NATO allies have expressed willingness to contribute to possible multilateral efforts to secure freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz. In May 2026, the French and UK governments convened a group of 38 governments, including 19 other NATO allies, to pledge “their political support to an independent and strictly defensive multinational military mission” to support freedom of navigation through the strait. They underscored that such a mission would not take place until active hostilities had ceased, stating that the potential mission “will only commence in a permissive environment and in full accordance with international law and national constitutions.”⁹ At a subsequent meeting of NATO foreign ministers, some allied governments reportedly endorsed a possible NATO role in a Strait of Hormuz mission, though other allies reportedly echoed French concerns that “it is not [NATO’s] purpose nor is it the right alliance to focus on the issue in the Middle East and the Strait of Hormuz.”¹⁰ NATO air defense capabilities in Turkey have protected Turkish airspace since the start of the conflict, and other allied governments have deployed defensive capabilities to assist Cyprus (an EU member but not a NATO ally) and partner countries in the Middle East.

A top Trump Administration priority for NATO has been to urge European allies and Canada to increase defense spending and enhance their military capabilities for NATO defense and deterrence efforts. The Administration’s National Defense Strategy, released in January 2026, articulates a parallel goal to decrease U.S. conventional military support for Europe’s defense as European allies bolster their own capabilities. According to the strategy, “Europe taking primary responsibility for its own conventional defense is the answer to the security threats it faces. The [Department of Defense] will therefore incentivize and enable NATO allies to take primary responsibility for Europe’s conventional defense with critical but more limited U.S. support.”¹¹ (The Department of Defense is “using a secondary Department of War designation,” under Executive Order 14347 of September 5, 2025.)

⁶ Mark Landler, “Europe Didn’t Want War with Iran. But, So Far, It Can’t Stay Out of It,” *New York Times*, March 7, 2026; Phil Stewart, “Pentagon Declines to Reaffirm NATO’s Collective Defense, Says Up to Trump,” Reuters, March 31, 2026; John Irish and Angelo Amonte, “Europe Pushes Back on Some U.S. Military Operations as Concerns over Iran War Mount,” Reuters, March 31, 2026.

⁷ Connor Stringer, “Exclusive Interview: Trump: I am Strongly Considering Pulling Out of NATO,” *The Telegraph*, April 1, 2026.

⁸ John Vandiver, “NATO Chief Trumpets Examples of Allied Assistance in Iran War During White House Visit,” *Stars and Stripes*, June 25, 2026.

⁹ Government of the United Kingdom, “Joint Statement on the Multinational Military Mission for the Strait of Hormuz,” May 12, 2026.

¹⁰ As quoted by Victor Jack, “Sweden ‘Open’ to NATO Role in Reopening Strait of Hormuz,” *Politico.eu*, May 22, 2026.

¹¹ Department of Defense, *2026 National Defense Strategy: Restoring Peace Through Strength for a New Golden Age of America*, January 2026.

Administration officials have outlined a vision for NATO based on the main tenets of the National Defense Strategy. In February 2026, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Elbridge Colby stated that the Administration’s policy toward NATO “requires much greater efforts by our allies to step up and assume primary responsibility for the conventional defense of Europe.”¹² (The Under Secretary of Defense is using “Under Secretary of War” as a “secondary” designation under Executive Order 14347 dated September 5, 2025.) According to Colby, the United States “will continue to provide the U.S. extended nuclear deterrent. And [the United States] will also continue, in a more limited and focused fashion, to provide conventional capabilities that contribute to NATO’s defense.” Colby has stressed that “there is nothing anti-European about this vision. To the contrary, it reflects hope and indeed confidence in Europe’s capacity to act substantially and vigorously.”¹³

Some European allies view the Trump Administration’s stated desire to reduce U.S. defense responsibilities in Europe and the U.S. President’s criticisms of NATO, statements on Greenland, and lack of coordination with allies prior to operations against Iran as signs of a major shift in U.S. defense and security policy, with potentially significant implications for the alliance. Leaders in some European NATO member states have echoed German Chancellor Friedrich Merz’s assessment that “a chasm, a deep rift, has opened between Europe and the United States.”¹⁴ In addition to addressing disagreements on trade policy and political culture and values, Merz and other European leaders have called for a Europe that is “much more independent from the U.S. in terms of security policy.”¹⁵

At the same time, some NATO and allied officials, including NATO Secretary General Rutte, underscore that the United States remains an indispensable member of the alliance, and caution that European allies and the EU could be hard-pressed to replace the full complement of U.S. military capabilities in Europe in the foreseeable future.¹⁶ Rutte has echoed the Trump Administration’s calls for increased allied defense spending and investment, credited President Trump with helping raise defense spending levels across the alliance, cited Trump as a driver of NATO’s efforts to address security challenges posed by the People’s Republic of China (PRC, or China), and expressed support for a more robust NATO role in maintaining security in the Arctic region.¹⁷ Secretary General Rutte has faced criticism from some European allies for expressing support for U.S. military operations against Iran.¹⁸ Regarding broader discussions on the U.S. role in NATO, Rutte stated the following at the 2026 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland,

¹² Department of Defense, “Remarks by Under Secretary of War for Policy Elbridge Colby at the NATO Defense Ministerial,” February 12, 2026. The Under Secretary of Defense is using “Under Secretary of War” as a “secondary” designation under Executive Order 14347, dated September 5, 2025.

¹³ Department of Defense, “Remarks by Under Secretary of War for Policy Elbridge Colby at the NATO Defense Ministerial,” February 12, 2026.

¹⁴ German Federal Government, “Speech by the Federal Chancellor at the Munich Security Conference on 13. February in Munich,” February 13, 2026.

¹⁵ Friedrich Merz, as quoted by Geir Moulson, “German Leader Says U.S. Strategy Shows the Need for More European Security Independence,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 9, 2025. See also Ben Hall and Henry Foy, “NATO Without America: Europe ‘Thinks the Unthinkable,’” *Financial Times*, January 28, 2026; and Yaroslav Trofimov, “The West Stepped Back from the Brink. But Europe’s Distrust of America Lingers,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 22, 2026.

¹⁶ See, for example, Jennifer Rankin, “‘Keep on Dreaming:’ Could Europe Really Defend Itself Without the U.S.?” *The Guardian*, January 31, 2026.

¹⁷ NATO, “Remarks by NATO Secretary General at World Economic Forum, Davos,” January 21, 2026; NATO, “Press Conference by Incoming NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte,” October 1, 2024.

¹⁸ See, for example, Steven Erlanger and Lara Jakes, “NATO’s ‘Trump Whisperer’ Faces Blowback over Support for Iran War,” *New York Times*, March 25, 2026.

The EU is great. [23 of NATO's 32 members are also in the EU.] But [the EU] is only 25% of NATO's overall GDP. 75% of NATO GDP is outside the European Union. Let's not forget, that's a fact. The U.S. is by far the most powerful nation on Earth. And the President of the United States is therefore the leader of the free world. And you cannot envision NATO without the leader of the free world being an integral part of that organization. And nobody wants it, not on the U.S. side, not on the European side ... I have no doubt the U.S. will come to the rescue here [in Europe]. We will come to the rescue of the U.S. And we need each other for our collective protection.¹⁹

Defense Spending and Investment

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 counter security threats posed by Russia, which he maintains could be ready to use military force against NATO by 2030, and the PRC's military modernization, among other potential threats.²⁰ In Ankara, Rutte says he expects all allies to put forward "concrete plans for increased investment."²¹

At NATO's June 2025 summit in The Hague, the Netherlands, the allies adopted a new defense investment plan under which they agreed to "invest 5% of GDP [i.e., gross domestic product] annually on core defense requirements as well as defense- and security-related spending by 2035." The 5% commitment is to encompass 3.5% of GDP for "core defense requirements" and 1.5% of GDP for defense-related expenditures, including building relevant infrastructure and defense industrial capacity. Allies agreed that contributions to Ukraine's defense, including its defense industry, would count toward the 5% goal. Allied defense investments are to conform with new NATO "capability targets," including a fivefold increase in air defense capabilities, among other enhancements.²²

In 2014, the allies adopted the so-called Wales Defense Investment Pledge, under which they committed to "aim to move towards" adopting national defense budgets that meet or exceed 2% of GDP, and devote at least 20% of defense spending to procurement and modernization, by the year 2024.²³ NATO estimates published in March 2026 indicated that all NATO members met the 2%-of-GDP benchmark in 2025, compared with three allies in 2014, and that all allies met the 20% procurement and modernization target, compared with eight allies in 2014.²⁴

Ahead of the Ankara summit, NATO Secretary General Rutte has highlighted what he characterized as a "profound ... sea change in [European allies'] approach to defense spending" over the last decade.²⁵ According to Rutte, from 2016 to 2026, European allies and Canada have spent an additional \$1.2 trillion on defense, including a 20% increase of \$139 billion between 2024 and 2025. Rutte noted that at least four allies—including Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland—are already allocating more than 3.5% of GDP for core defense spending. He added that Germany, with Europe's largest defense budget (about \$120 billion in 2025), has doubled its

¹⁹ NATO, "Remarks by NATO Secretary General at World Economic Forum, Davos," January 21, 2026.

²⁰ NATO, "Building a Better NATO: Speech by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte at Chatham House," June 10, 2025.

²¹ NATO, "Atlantic Council Front Page Conversation with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte," June 25, 2026.

²² NATO, "NATO Secretary General Outlines Expectations Ahead of Historic Summit," June 23, 2025.

²³ NATO, *Wales Summit Declaration*, September 5, 2014.

²⁴ NATO does not include NATO member Iceland in its defense spending calculations, as Iceland does not have a military. NATO, *The Secretary General's Annual Report: 2025*, March 2026.

²⁵ NATO, "Atlantic Council Front Page Conversation with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte," June 25, 2026.

defense budget since 2022 and has concrete plans to reach the 3.5% of GDP core defense spending target in 2029.²⁶ Secretary General Rutte also has acknowledged reports suggesting that some allies—including the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovenia—may fall below 2% of GDP defense spending this year, and that others—including Spain, Italy, and the UK—do not have plans in place to meet the new spending targets agreed at last year’s summit.²⁷

New NATO defense spending commitments have been driven in part by concerns about shortfalls in European military capacity exposed by the war in Ukraine since 2022.²⁸ NATO officials have expressed particular concern about low munitions stockpiles in most member states, and in 2024 reportedly assessed that allies would not have been able to provide more than 5% of the air defense capabilities deemed necessary to defend allies in Central and Eastern Europe from a full-scale attack.²⁹ Secretary General Rutte has since called for a 400% increase in allied air defense capabilities to protect against possible attacks from Russia.³⁰

NATO and the EU have worked with European governments to contract with the defense sector to ramp up materiel production. Analysts and industry representatives caution that it could take time to build the necessary manufacturing capacity, leaving a potential short-term gap between allies’ and Ukraine’s defense needs and European supply. The supply shortfalls have spurred renewed calls for pan-European coordination to produce arms, including for Ukraine.

In 2025, the EU—23 of whose members are also members of NATO—announced the *ReArm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030*, an initiative to increase member states’ defense spending by about \$865 billion (€800 billion) over the next five years.³¹ The plan, which cites Russia as posing a fundamental threat to European security, calls for a “once-in-a-generation surge in European defense investment” and asserts that “if Russia is allowed to achieve its goals in Ukraine, its territorial ambition will extend beyond.”³² The new EU defense plans call for close coordination with NATO, and the EU is negotiating agreements with several non-EU members, including the UK, to allow some defense companies outside the EU to access EU financing through the new EU initiative. Thus far, the United States and the EU have not announced an agreement to allow U.S. companies access to EU defense funds, although U.S. officials, including Vice President JD Vance, have urged the EU to open its new defense plans to companies from the United States.³³

²⁶ NATO, “Atlantic Council Front Page Conversation with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte,” June 25, 2026; NATO, *The Secretary General’s Annual Report: 2025*, March 2026.

²⁷ NATO, “Pre-Ministerial Press Conference by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte Ahead of the Meetings of NATO Defense Ministers in Brussels, Belgium,” June 17, 2026; Jacopo Barigazzi et al., “The 6 NATO Allies in Danger of Trump’s Defense Spending Backlash,” *Politico.eu*, June 17, 2026.

²⁸ See, for example, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), *Is NATO Ready for War?*, June 11, 2024.

²⁹ Before the renewed conflict in Ukraine, few, if any, NATO allies reportedly met a NATO standard to maintain munition stockpiles adequate for 30 days of high-intensity conflict, and some, including Germany, stockpiled munitions for two to three days of conflict. Henry Foy and John Paul Rathbone, “NATO Has Just 5% of Air Defenses Needed to Protect Eastern Flank,” *Financial Times*, May 29, 2024; Max Bergmann, *Europe Needs a Paradigm Shift in How It Supports Ukraine*, CSIS, January 17, 2024.

³⁰ NATO, “Speech by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte at the Gala Dinner of the European Defense Exhibition and Conference (BEDEX 2026) in Brussels,” March 12, 2026.

³¹ In 2024, EU members spent a combined \$352 billion (€326 billion) on defense, equivalent to about 1.9% of the EU’s GDP (a 31% increase compared to 2021). European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *Joint White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030*, March 19, 2025, p. 16. Hereinafter, *Joint White Paper*.

³² *Joint White Paper*.

³³ Sophia Besch and Erik Brown, “Who’s Going to Unite Europe on Defense?” Carnegie Endowment, March 21, 2025; Jeff Mason and Andrea Shalal, “After Critical Remarks in Europe, Vance Adopts More Conciliatory Tone Toward Europe,” Reuters, May 7, 2025.

NATO also has launched related initiatives, including a transatlantic NATO Industrial Capacity Expansion Pledge and a Defense Production Action Plan, intended to spur such investment. A key priority is to address shortfalls in ammunition, air and missile defense, and long-range weapons.³⁴ Rutte has said increased allied defense spending should spur “a transatlantic defense industrial revolution” and says he expects allies to announce “tens of billions of dollars of new [defense] contracts” at the Ankara summit.³⁵

Collective Defense

NATO leaders characterized Russia’s 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine as the “most dangerous moment in European security in a generation,” and NATO’s 2022 Strategic Concept identified Russia as “the most significant and direct threat to Allies’ security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.”³⁶

In response to the threat from Russia, the alliance has adopted what its leaders have portrayed as “the most comprehensive [NATO] defense plans since the Cold War.”³⁷ NATO’s regional defense plans and corresponding force structure requirements—deemed by NATO to be “a larger, more demanding” request of members than NATO has made in more than three decades—specify what is expected of each ally to defend and deter “against any aggressor from any direction.”³⁸ NATO leaders note, however, that successful implementation would require increased defense investments from NATO members.³⁹ Some analysts have expressed concern that the Trump Administration has reduced the number of military capabilities the United States will make available to fulfill NATO defense plans (see “U.S. Force Posture in Europe,” below).⁴⁰

NATO’s collective defense plans and force requirements are intended to bolster an enhanced NATO presence in the eastern part of the alliance. NATO deployed to the region for the first time in the alliance’s history after Russia’s 2014 invasion of Ukraine. Since the February 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine, NATO has doubled the number of battalion-sized multinational battlegroups (between 1,000 and 2,000 soldiers each) along its eastern flank, deploying battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, in addition to the four that have been present in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland since 2016. A total of about 10,000 allied soldiers are deployed to the battlegroups, each led by a different “framework nation.”⁴¹ Individual

³⁴ NATO, “NATO’s Role in Defense Industry Production,” updated June 26, 2025.

³⁵ NATO, “Atlantic Council Front Page Conversation with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte,” June 25, 2026.

³⁶ NATO, “NATO Secretary General: This Is the Most Dangerous Moment for European Security in a Generation,” February 22, 2022; NATO, *NATO 2022 Strategic Concept*, adopted July 2022.

³⁷ NATO, “Press Conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg Following the Meeting of NATO Heads of State and Government,” July 10, 2024.

³⁸ NATO officials report that approximately 500,000 allied troops, across all domains, are currently available at high readiness, exceeding the goal of 300,000 set at NATO’s 2022 Madrid Summit. NATO, “Deterrence and Defence”; NATO, “Press Conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg Following the Meeting of NATO Heads of State and Government,” July 10, 2024.

³⁹ NATO, “Keynote Speech by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Conference ‘75 Years of NATO: How to Keep It on Track,’” May 30, 2024; NATO, *Washington Summit Declaration*, July 10, 2024.

⁴⁰ Victor Jack, “U.S. to Pull Jets, Destroyers and Submarines from NATO as Part of European Drawdown,” *Politico.eu*, May 26, 2026; Department of Defense, “Remarks by Secretary of War Pete Hegseth at the 2026 NATO Defense Ministerial in Brussels,” June 18, 2026.

⁴¹ The framework nations for NATO’s battlegroups are as follows: Italy leads a battlegroup in Bulgaria, the UK leads a battlegroup in Estonia, Hungary leads a battlegroup in Hungary, Canada in Latvia, Germany in Lithuania, the United States in Poland, France in Romania, and the Czech Republic in Slovakia. For more detail, see NATO, “Strengthening NATO’s Eastern Flank,” June 17, 2026.

allies have designated combat-ready national military units to “scale-up” the battlegroups to brigade-sized units on short notice.

Despite these measures, NATO members remain concerned about the potential for a wider conflict involving Russia. Since 2022, NATO has begun to move from a “tripwire” posture, aimed at deterring a Russian military invasion, to a “forward defense posture” intended to drive back an invasion. As part of such efforts, Germany is in the process of permanently stationing a brigade of about 5,000 personnel in Lithuania by 2027,⁴² and Canada and Latvia have signed a plan for scaling up the NATO battle group in Latvia to brigade size, including the persistent deployment of 2,200 Canadian personnel this year.⁴³

In 2025, NATO launched two new “military activities”: Baltic Sentry, to counter acts of “sabotage” that damaged undersea energy and communication cables in the Baltic Sea region, and Eastern Sentry, to counter repeated violations of allied airspace along NATO’s eastern flank by Russian drones and planes. Baltic Sentry’s launch followed a year during which at least 11 undersea communications cables in the Baltic Sea sustained damage, deemed in most cases to be the result of sabotage.⁴⁴ Since January 2025, Baltic Sentry has deployed a range of allied assets, including frigates, maritime patrol aircraft, naval drones, and integrated national surveillance capabilities.⁴⁵ NATO military commanders have assessed that instances of undersea sabotage decreased after the new NATO operation but caution that sustaining the NATO presence at full capacity could be a challenge.⁴⁶

Since September 2025, Eastern Sentry has sought to protect allied air space through the deployment of additional fighter jets, air defense systems, and surveillance aircraft in the eastern part of the alliance.⁴⁷ Eastern Sentry’s launch followed numerous Russian violations of allied airspace, including drone incursions into Polish and Romanian airspace and fighter jets in Estonian airspace. Poland and Estonia initiated formal NATO consultations under Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty in response to the airspace violations, and President Trump reportedly said allies should shoot down Russian aircraft entering their airspace.⁴⁸ Analysts assess that allies could be challenged to sustain a robust response to the airspace violations due to the high costs and limited supply of sophisticated air defense systems.⁴⁹

NATO and the Arctic

President Trump’s renewed calls for U.S. control of Greenland on national security grounds have brought heightened attention to security threats in the Arctic region—also referred to within NATO as the High North—and have spurred policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic to call for greater NATO engagement to address these threats. Following a meeting with Secretary General Rutte at the 2026 World Economic Forum in Davos, President Trump announced that he and Rutte had “formed the framework of a future deal with respect to

⁴² Bundeswehr, “The Bundeswehr in Lithuania: Major Steps Toward the German Maneuver Brigade,” updated regularly at <https://www.bundeswehr.de/en/news/bundeswehr-lithuania>.

⁴³ Government of Canada, *Canada-Latvia Relations*, at <https://www.international.gc.ca/country-pays/latvia-lettonie/relations.aspx?lang=eng>.

⁴⁴ John Leicester and Emma Burrows, “11 Baltic Cables Damaged in 15 Months, Pushing NATO to Boost Security,” Associated Press, January 28, 2025.

⁴⁵ NATO, “NATO Launches ‘Baltic Sentry’ to Increase Critical Infrastructure Security,” January 14, 2025.

⁴⁶ *Economist*, “A Rash of Baltic Cable-Cutting Raises Fears of Sabotage,” January 6, 2026.

⁴⁷ NATO, “NATO Launches ‘Eastern Sentry’ to Bolster Posture Along Eastern Flank,” September 12, 2025.

⁴⁸ Max Rego, “Trump: NATO Countries Should Shoot Down Russian Planes If They Enter Airspace,” *The Hill*, September 23, 2025.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Charlie Edwards, “The Paradox of Russian Escalation and NATO’s Response,” Institute for International and Strategic Studies, September 26, 2025.

Greenland and, in fact, the entire Arctic region.”⁵⁰ Neither Trump nor Rutte elaborated publicly on the details of this framework, though some analysts speculated that any such future arrangement could involve an expansion of NATO’s military presence in the Arctic.⁵¹ In response to President Trump’s announcement, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said that “NATO is fully aware of the Kingdom of Denmark’s position. We can negotiate about everything politically—security, investments, the economy. But we cannot negotiate our sovereignty.... The Kingdom of Denmark continues to seek a constructive dialogue with allies on how we can strengthen security in the Arctic.”⁵²

In February 2026, Secretary General Rutte announced a new NATO “multi-domain activity” named Arctic Sentry intended to counter “Russia’s increasing military activity and China’s growing interest in the Arctic.”⁵³ Secretary General Rutte further noted that Arctic Sentry would be led by Joint Force Command Norfolk and would “further strengthen NATO’s posture in the Arctic and High North by bringing together NATO and Allied activities into one, overarching operational approach.” Arctic Sentry’s initial activities have focused on coordinating large-scale military exercises in Denmark, Norway, and elsewhere in the region.

European allied support for an expanded NATO presence in the Arctic follows several post-Cold War decades of reduced NATO engagement in the region. Prior to 2022, NATO strategic guidance did not foresee a substantial NATO role in the Arctic and deferred to the preference of NATO Arctic states, including Canada, Denmark, Iceland, and Norway, for a reduced military presence, under the slogan, “High North, Low Tension.”⁵⁴ Several factors, including Russian aggression, melting sea ice, and the accession to NATO of Finland and Sweden (in 2023 and 2024, respectively), have changed allied perceptions of security dynamics in the region. NATO’s 2022 Strategic Concept was the first NATO strategic document that explicitly identified vulnerabilities in the High North as posing a potential “strategic challenge” to the alliance.⁵⁵

Since 2022, NATO has increased military exercises in the region, incorporated defense of the Arctic into new NATO defense plans, and endorsed new NATO facilities in at least two of NATO’s Arctic member states. In 2024, NATO defense ministers approved the establishment of a Multi-Corps Land Component Command (MCLCC) and the positioning of Swedish-led Forward Land Forces (FLF) in Finland. In 2025, NATO and the Norwegian government announced that a NATO Combined Air Operations Center would be located in Bodø, Norway.⁵⁶

U.S. Force Posture in Europe

The Obama Administration and the first Trump Administration supported NATO’s bolstered force posture in the eastern part of the alliance following Russia’s initial invasion of Ukraine in 2014. The United States also augmented U.S. military deployments in Europe in conjunction with these NATO enhancements. Following Russia’s February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, the Biden Administration deployed about 20,000 additional armed forces personnel to Europe, bringing the total number of U.S. forces in Europe to about 100,000 in mid-2022.⁵⁷ Troop levels decreased in

⁵⁰ President Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump), <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115934734335579278>, January 21, 2026; Emily Davies et al., “Trump Hails ‘Framework’ of Greenland Deal, Reversing Tariff Threats,” *Washington Post*, January 21, 2026.

⁵¹ See, for example, Stephen Hadley and Franklin Kramer, “Resolving the Greenland Challenge Through Shared Responsibility,” Atlantic Council, January 26, 2026.

⁵² *Politico.eu*, “EU Leaders Welcome Lowered Temperature with U.S. – For Now,” January 22, 2026.

⁵³ NATO, “NATO Secretary General Outlines New Activity—Arctic Sentry—Ahead of Defense Ministers Meeting,” February 11, 2026.

⁵⁴ NATO Allied Command Transformation, “The Evolving Dynamics of the High North and NATO’s Strategic Imperatives,” December 19, 2023.

⁵⁵ Anna Wieslander, “How Sweden and Finland’s Membership in NATO Affects the High North,” Atlantic Council, October 2024.

⁵⁶ Njall Trausti Fridbertsson, “Renavigating the Unfrozen Arctic,” NATO Parliamentary Assembly, October 12, 2025.

⁵⁷ White House, “Fact Sheet: The 2022 NATO Summit in Madrid,” June 29, 2022; Department of Defense, “Fact Sheet: Posture Updates in Support of Allies in Europe,” March 28, 2022.

subsequent years, with U.S. military commanders reporting that about 86,000 U.S. armed forces personnel were assigned or deployed to NATO countries in Europe as of March 2026.⁵⁸

In addition to long-standing permanent bases in Germany, the UK, Italy, Turkey, and other countries in Western Europe, U.S. force posture in Europe since 2022 has included rotational deployment of up to two Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) of about 4,000 soldiers each in Central and Eastern Europe and deployment of about 10,000 military personnel to Poland, including 800 soldiers in a U.S.-led NATO battlegroup.⁵⁹

As noted above, Trump Administration officials and Administration policy guidance, including the *2026 National Defense Strategy*, have articulated a goal of reducing the U.S. conventional military footprint in Europe. In June 2026, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth announced that the Department of Defense would undertake a six-month review of U.S. force posture in Europe. (The Secretary of Defense is using “Secretary of War” as a “secondary title” under Executive Order 14347, dated September 5, 2025.) Secretary Hegseth suggested that changes to U.S. force posture and U.S. financial contributions could be “contingent on other countries meeting their defense spending targets. Where other allies do not spend with urgency, our cues and contributions will go down.”⁶⁰

According to Secretary Hegseth, Administration officials have notified alliance military commanders that the United States will scale back its contributions to the NATO Force Model, a classified system under which alliance members identify the soldiers and equipment available to respond to a potential attack.⁶¹ The U.S. reductions reportedly could include halving the number of U.S. strategic bombers available in the event of an attack, reducing the number of fighter jets available by one-third, and making no submarines available.⁶² Secretary General Rutte has acknowledged that the Administration has “adjusted its pledges” to the NATO Force Model but underscored that “other allies have stepped up to contribute more” and noted that NATO defense plans have historically been “overly reliant on the U.S.”⁶³ Some analysts express concern that U.S. reductions would create gaps that would be difficult for European allies to fill in the near-to-medium term, including for submarines and strategic bombers.⁶⁴

Since October 2025, the Administration has announced plans to withdraw at least 9,000—and possibly up to 13,000—U.S. troops from Europe over the next year, including the following:

- In October 2025, U.S. defense officials announced that a BCT of about 4,000 soldiers on rotational deployment primarily in Romania would be withdrawn and would not be replaced. In its announcement, the Pentagon stated, “This is not an American withdrawal from Europe or a signal of lessened commitment to NATO

⁵⁸ Department of Defense, Special Inspector General’s Report to the United States Congress: Operation Atlantic Resolve, Including U.S. Government Activities Related to Ukraine, January 1–March 31, 2026, https://media.defense.gov/2026/May/18/2003933281/-1/-1/1/OAR_Q2_MAR2026_FINAL_508.PDF.

⁵⁹ Department of Defense, *Special Inspector General’s Report to the United States Congress: Operation Atlantic Resolve, Including U.S. Government Activities Related to Ukraine*, January 1–March 31, 2026.

⁶⁰ Department of Defense, “Remarks by Secretary of War Pete Hegseth at the 2026 NATO Defense Ministerial in Brussels,” June 18, 2026.

⁶¹ Department of Defense, “Remarks by Secretary of War Pete Hegseth at the 2026 NATO Defense Ministerial in Brussels,” June 18, 2026.

⁶² Markus Wacket et al., “Report: U.S. to Cut Strategic Bombers and Warships Available to NATO in a Crisis,” *Defense News*, May 26, 2026.

⁶³ NATO, “Pre-Ministerial Press Conference by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte Ahead of the Meetings of NATO Defense Ministers in Brussels, Belgium,” June 17, 2026.

⁶⁴ Victor Jack, “U.S. to Pull Jets, Destroyers and Submarines from NATO as Part of European Drawdown,” *Politico.eu*, May 26, 2026.

- and Article 5. Rather this is a positive sign of increased European capability and responsibility.... This force posture adjustment will not change the security environment in Europe.”⁶⁵
- In April 2026, after German Chancellor Merz criticized some aspects of U.S. negotiations with Iran, President Trump stated that he was considering withdrawing U.S. troops stationed in the country.⁶⁶ On May 1, Secretary of Defense Hegseth reportedly announced that about 5,000 U.S. troops would be withdrawn from Germany over the next 6 to 12 months.⁶⁷
 - On May 19, 2026, U.S. defense officials announced that the United States would be withdrawing an additional BCT (approximately 4,000 soldiers) from Europe, “resulting in the temporary delay of the deployment of U.S. forces to Poland, which is a model U.S. ally.”⁶⁸ The Department of Defense noted that this would return U.S. force posture to the number of BCTs deployed in Europe in 2021, prior to Russia’s renewed invasion of Ukraine. On May 21, 2026, President Trump posted on social media platform Truth Social that his Administration would be deploying “an additional 5,000 troops to Poland.”⁶⁹

One factor guiding Trump Administration decisions on U.S. force posture in Europe could be an assessment of the threat posed by Russia that differs from other allied assessments. The *2026 National Defense Strategy* characterizes Russia as posing a “persistent but manageable threat to NATO’s eastern members for the foreseeable future” and assesses that “Moscow is in no position to make a bid for European hegemony. European NATO dwarfs Russia in economic scale, population, and, thus, latent military power.”⁷⁰ As noted above, NATO has identified Russia as the most significant and direct threat to allied security, and Secretary General Rutte has warned that Russia could be prepared to use military force against NATO by 2030.

Some observers posit that some of President Trump’s announcements on U.S. troop deployments in Europe could be guided by his views on host country governments. They point, for example, to President Trump’s criticisms of German Chancellor Merz before announcing a troop withdrawal from Germany and his praise of Polish President Karol Nawrocki before his May 21 statement on deploying additional troops to Poland.⁷¹ Defense Secretary Hegseth also has said that decisions on U.S. force posture in Europe could be contingent on individual allies’ defense spending commitments.⁷²

⁶⁵ Department of Defense, “Press Release—Department of War Announces Change to Army Unit Rotation in Europe,” October 29, 2025; Michael Gordon, “U.S. Reduces Troop Number in Romania, Signaling Shifting Priorities,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 29, 2025.

⁶⁶ David Sanger, “Trump Threatens to Pull U.S. Troops from Germany as He Lashes Out at German Chancellor,” *New York Times*, April 29, 2026.

⁶⁷ Aaron Pellish and Paul McCleary, “Hegseth Orders Withdrawal of 5,000 U.S. Troops From Germany,” *Politico.com*, May 1, 2026.

⁶⁸ Department of Defense, “Statement Attributable to Assistant to the Secretary of War for Public Affairs,” May 19, 2026, <https://www.war.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/4496531/statement-attributable-to-assistant-to-the-secretary-of-war-for-public-affairs/>.

⁶⁹ As quoted in Associated Press, “Trump Says He’s Sending 5,000 More Troops to Poland,” May 22, 2026.

⁷⁰ Department of Defense, “2026 National Defense Strategy: Restoring Peace Through Strength for a New Golden Age of America,” January 2026.

⁷¹ See, for example, Associated Press, “Trump Says He’s Sending 5,000 More Troops to Poland,” May 22, 2026, and Jack Detsch et al., “Trump’s Calls to Reduce U.S. Troops in Germany Shocks Pentagon,” *Politico.com*, April 30, 2026.

⁷² Department of Defense, “Remarks by Secretary of War Pete Hegseth at the 2026 NATO Defense Ministerial in Brussels,” June 18, 2026.

As discussed below, in the FY2026 NDAA (P.L. 119-60), Congress prohibited the use of funds to reduce the number of U.S. military personnel in Europe below 76,000 without first consulting and reporting to Congress. Some Members of Congress, including the chairs of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, have expressed varying degrees of concern about and opposition to the Administration's announced troop reductions. In May 2026, the committee chairs stated that they were "very concerned by the decision to withdraw a brigade from Germany," adding that Germany had "stepped up in response to President Trump's calls for greater burden sharing."⁷³ In October 2025, the chairs stated that they "strongly oppose the decision not to maintain the rotational U.S. brigade in Romania and the Pentagon's process for its ongoing force posture review that may result in further drawdowns of U.S. forces from Eastern Europe."⁷⁴

Support for Ukraine

Another key priority for NATO officials since Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine has been to institutionalize long-term allied support for Ukraine, both from individual allies and from NATO as a whole. This includes a NATO mission to coordinate security assistance and training for the Ukrainian Armed Forces (NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine, or NSATU), and a multiyear financial pledge of support from NATO allies.⁷⁵ Secretary General Rutte has expressed support for Trump Administration-led efforts to negotiate a peace agreement in Ukraine and has emphasized that any peace settlement should be "fair" and "enduring" and should ensure Russian President Vladimir Putin "never, ever ... [tries] again to get one square kilometer or one square mile of Ukraine in the future."⁷⁶ Some allied governments have expressed concern about perceived diminished U.S. support for Ukraine under the Trump Administration. These concerns have grown as some NATO and European officials report that U.S. military operations against Iran could lead to procurement shortages and delays that may affect assistance to Ukraine.⁷⁷

In July 2025, NATO began to coordinate the purchase of defense equipment for Ukraine from the United States by other NATO allies, through the so-called Prioritized Ukraine Requirements List (PURL) initiative. Under PURL, NATO military commanders identify military equipment and munitions needed by Ukraine that the United States can provide in greater volumes than other allies. European allies and Canada then purchase the equipment, and NATO coordinates delivery to Ukraine through the NSATU. According to the Department of Defense, as of March 2026, NATO allies and partners had committed more than \$4.8 billion in PURL-related assistance, of which about \$4.2 billion had been transferred.⁷⁸ A June 2026 assessment by the Atlantic Council estimated that allies had committed \$5.5 billion to purchases through PURL.⁷⁹

⁷³ House Armed Services Committee Press Release, "Chairmen of Armed Services Committees Release Statement on Withdrawal of Troops from Germany," May 2, 2026.

⁷⁴ House Armed Services Committee Press Release, "Rogers and Wicker: We Strongly Oppose the Pentagon's Decision to Scale Back the U.S. Troop Presence in Romania," October 29, 2025.

⁷⁵ NATO, "Press Conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg Following the Meeting of NATO Heads of State and Government," July 10, 2024.

⁷⁶ NATO, "Press Conference by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte Following the Meetings of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs," April 4, 2025.

⁷⁷ Noah Robertson and Ellen Francis, "Pentagon Considers Diverting Ukraine Military Aid to the Middle East," *Washington Post*, March 26, 2026.

⁷⁸ Department of Defense, *Special Inspector General's Report to the United States Congress: Operation Atlantic Resolve, Including U.S. Government Activities Related to Ukraine*, January 1–March 31, 2026.

⁷⁹ Kristen Taylor and Matt Trunkey, "How European NATO Allies Are Stepping Up, By the Numbers," Atlantic Council, June 23, 2026.

Some analysts have characterized the efforts to secure longer-term pledges of assistance and to institutionalize NATO coordination as attempts to “future proof” NATO support for Ukraine in response to unpredictable political dynamics across the alliance. They have pointed specifically to political debates and related delays in assistance in some member states, including the United States.⁸⁰ The Trump Administration’s 2026 National Defense Strategy calls on the United States’ NATO allies to “[take] the lead in supporting Ukraine’s defense. As President Trump has said, the war in Ukraine must end. As he has also emphasized, however, this is Europe’s responsibility first and foremost. Securing and sustaining peace will therefore require leadership and commitment from our NATO allies.”⁸¹

A possible key question for NATO remains whether and how to offer Ukraine a clearer path to membership. Since 2008, NATO summit communiqués have reiterated a broad pledge that Ukraine would one day become a member but has not offered a timetable of specific benchmarks for a formal invitation. In 2024, allies echoed previous declarations that “Ukraine’s future is in NATO” and for the first time characterized Ukraine’s path to NATO membership as “irreversible.”⁸² At the same time, officials in both the Biden and the Trump Administrations and some other allied governments, including Germany, reportedly have said Ukraine will not join NATO while the war is ongoing.⁸³ In February 2025, Secretary of Defense Hegseth augmented this view, stating that “the United States does not believe that NATO membership for Ukraine is a realistic outcome of a negotiated settlement.”⁸⁴ Other allies, including Poland and the Baltic states, have called for a more defined pathway to membership and have cautioned that postponing membership decisions could incentivize Russia to prolong the war.⁸⁵

Issues for Congress

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 PRC.

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. Section 1250A of the FY2024 NDAA (P.L. 118-31), for example,

⁸⁰ See, for example, Lorne Cook, “NATO Approves a Plan to Speed Security Aid and Training to Ukraine’s Beleaguered Armed Forces,” Associated Press, June 14, 2024; and Henry Foy, “NATO Plans \$100 billion ‘Trump-Proof’ Fund for Ukraine,” *Financial Times*, April 2, 2024.

⁸¹ Department of Defense, *2026 National Defense Strategy: Restoring Peace Through Strength for a New Golden Age of America*, January 2026.

⁸² NATO, *Washington Summit Declaration*, July 10, 2024.

⁸³ See, for example, Michael Crowley, “Ukraine’s Future Ties to NATO Are Main Topic as Western Nations Meet,” *New York Times*, June 1, 2023; and Gram Slattery and Jonathan Landay, “Trump’s Plan for Ukraine Comes into Focus: NATO off the Table and Concessions on Territory,” Reuters, December 4, 2024.

⁸⁴ Department of Defense, “Opening Remarks by Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth at Ukraine Defense Contact Group,” February 12, 2025.

⁸⁵ Ian Bond, *Ukraine’s Progress Towards NATO Membership: Going from Bucharest to Vilnius Without Moving?*, Centre for European Reform, June 8, 2023.

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. Some Members portrayed such measures as responses to President Trump’s criticisms of the alliance. At the same time, other Members have questioned the value of the United States’ continued robust role in European security matters and have credited President Trump’s approach to NATO with securing defense spending increases by other allies.⁸⁶

NATO-Related Provisions in the FY2026 National Defense Authorization Act

Several provisions of the FY2026 NDAA (P.L. 119-60) seek to expand congressional oversight of U.S. policy in Europe, including with respect to NATO, Ukraine, and Russia (primarily in Title XII, Subtitle E, “Matters Relating to Europe, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation”). Relevant provisions include the following:

- **Section 1249. Oversight of United States Military Posture in Europe.** Among other things, the provision prohibits the use of funds without formal certification and reporting to Congress to (1) reduce the number of U.S. armed forces in Europe to below 76,000 (for longer than 45 days), (2) divest from any U.S. military facilities under the jurisdiction of European command, (3) divest or withdraw U.S. European Command equipment or property valued at more than \$500,000, and (4) relinquish the dual-hatted role of U.S. European Commander as NATO’s top military official, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).
- **Section 1250. Report on United States Deterrence and Defense Posture in the European Region.** The provision requires the Commander of U.S. European Command to submit a report to Congress in conjunction with the President’s budget submission that outlines the “Commander’s independent assessment” of the activities and resources required to maintain the United States’ and NATO’s comparative advantage with respect to Russia.
- **Section 1247. Baltic Security Initiative.** The provision authorizes continued U.S. support for the Baltic Security Initiative, a program first established by Congress in 2020 to provide security assistance funding to NATO members Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
- **Section 1243. Extension and Modification of Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative.** Among other things, the provision extends the availability of U.S. funds for Ukraine under the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative.
- **Section 1244. Military Intelligence Support for Ukraine.** The provision requires notification to Congress within 48 hours of an Administration decision to “pause, terminate, or otherwise restrict or materially downgrade” intelligence support to the government of Ukraine.

⁸⁶ See, for example, House Foreign Affairs Majority post on X, June 24, 2026, at <https://x.com/HouseForeignGOP/status/2069904544235151726>.

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