

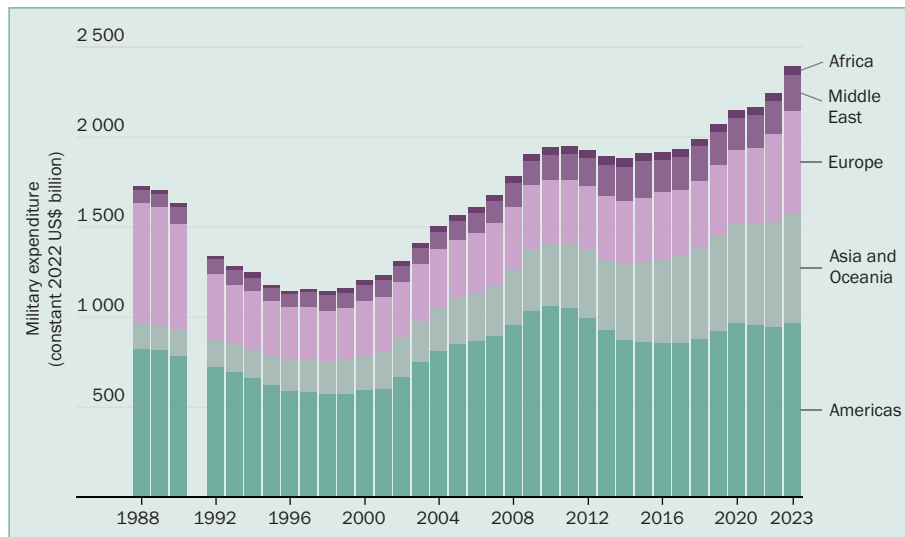
# TRENDS IN WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURE, 2023

NAN TIAN, DIEGO LOPES DA SILVA, XIAO LIANG AND LORENZO SCARAZZATO

World military expenditure increased for the ninth consecutive year in 2023, reaching a total of \$2443 billion. The 6.8 per cent increase in 2023 was the steepest year-on-year rise since 2009 and pushed global spending to the highest level SIPRI has ever recorded (see figure 1). The world military burden—defined as military spending as a percentage of global gross domestic product (GDP)—increased to 2.3 per cent in 2023. Average military expenditure as a share of government expenditure rose by 0.4 percentage points to 6.9 per cent in 2023 and world military spending per person was the highest since 1990, at \$306.

The rise in global military spending in 2023 can be attributed primarily to the ongoing war in Ukraine and escalating geopolitical tensions in Asia and Oceania and the Middle East. Military expenditure went up in all five geographical regions, with major spending increases recorded in Europe, Asia and Oceania and the Middle East.

This SIPRI Fact Sheet highlights trends in military expenditure for 2023 and over the decade 2014–23. The data, which replaces all military spending data previously published by SIPRI, comes from the updated SIPRI Military Expenditure Database.



**Figure 1.** World military expenditure, by region, 1988–2023

*Note:* The absence of data for the Soviet Union in 1991 means that no total can be calculated for that year.

*Source:* SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2024.

## KEY FACTS

- World military expenditure, driven by Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine and heightened geopolitical tensions, rose by 6.8 per cent in real terms (i.e. when adjusted for inflation) to \$2443 billion in 2023, the highest level ever recorded by SIPRI.
- In 2023 military spending increased in all five geographical regions for the first time since 2009.
- Total military expenditure accounted for 2.3 per cent of the global gross domestic product (GDP) in 2023.
- The five biggest spenders in 2023 were the United States, China, Russia, India and Saudi Arabia, which together accounted for 61 per cent of world military spending.
- The USA and China remained the top two biggest spenders in the world and both increased their military spending in 2023. US spending was \$916 billion while Chinese spending was an estimated \$296 billion.
- Russia’s military spending grew by 24 per cent in 2023 to an estimated \$109 billion. This was equivalent to 5.9 per cent of Russia’s GDP.
- Ukraine became the eighth largest military spender in 2023, increasing its spending by 51 per cent to \$64.8 billion, or 37 per cent of GDP.
- In 2023 military expenditure by NATO member states reached \$1341 billion or 55 per cent of world spending. Eleven of the 31 NATO members in 2023 met NATO’s 2 per cent of GDP military spending target, which was 4 more than in 2022.

**Table 1. The 40 countries with the highest military expenditure in 2023**

Spending figures and GDP are in US dollars, at current prices and exchange rates. Changes are in real terms, based on constant (2022) US dollars. Percentages below 10 are rounded to 1 decimal place; those over 10 are rounded to whole numbers. Figures and percentage shares may not add up to stated totals or subtotals due to the conventions of rounding.

Rank			Spending (\$ b.),	Change in		Spending as a share		Share of world
				spending (%)		of GDP (%) <sup>b</sup>		
2023	2022 <sup>a</sup>	Country	2023	2022–23	2014–23	2023	2014	2023
1	1	United States	916	2.3	9.9	3.4	3.7	37
2	2	China	[296]	6.0	60	[1.7]	[1.7]	[12]
3	3	Russia	[109]	24	57	[5.9]	[4.1]	[4.5]
4	4	India	83.6	4.2	44	2.4	2.5	3.4
5	5	Saudi Arabia	[75.8]	4.3	-18	[7.1]	[1.1]	[3.1]
<b>Subtotal top 5</b>			<b>1 481</b>	..	..	..	..	<b>61</b>
6	6	United Kingdom	74.9	7.9	14	2.3	2.2	3.1
7	7	Germany	66.8	9.0	48	1.5	1.1	2.7
8	11	Ukraine	64.8	51	1 272	37	3.0	2.7
9	8	France	61.3	6.5	21	2.1	1.9	2.5
10	9	Japan	50.2	11	31	1.2	1.0	2.1
<b>Subtotal top 10</b>			<b>1 799</b>	..	..	..	..	<b>74</b>
11	10	South Korea	47.9	1.1	34	2.8	2.5	2.0
12	12	Italy	35.5	-5.9	31	1.6	1.3	1.5
13	13	Australia	32.3	-1.5	34	1.9	1.8	1.3
14	19	Poland	31.6	75	181	3.8	1.9	1.3
15	15	Israel	27.5	24	44	5.3	5.6	1.1
<b>Subtotal top 15</b>			<b>1 974</b>	..	..	..	..	<b>81</b>
16	14	Canada	27.2	6.6	49	1.3	1.0	1.1
17	17	Spain	23.7	9.8	42	1.5	1.3	1.0
18	16	Brazil	22.9	3.1	-12	1.1	1.3	0.9
19	28	Algeria	18.3	76	59	8.2	5.5	0.7
20	21	Netherlands	16.6	14	56	1.5	1.2	0.7
21	20	Taiwan	16.6	11	56	2.2	1.8	0.7
22	23	Türkiye	15.8	37	59	1.5	1.9	0.6
23	22	Singapore	13.2	1.4	27	2.7	3.0	0.5
24	26	Mexico	11.8	-1.5	55	0.7	0.5	0.5
25	27	Colombia	10.7	1.4	20	2.9	3.1	0.4
26	33	Iran	10.3	0.6	34	2.1	2.1	0.4
27	25	Indonesia	9.5	-7.4	29	0.7	0.8	0.4
28	32	Sweden	8.8	12	63	1.5	1.1	0.4
29	30	Norway	8.7	3.5	49	1.6	1.5	0.4
30	24	Pakistan	8.5	-13	13	2.8	3.1	0.3
31	38	Denmark	8.1	39	108	2.0 <sup>c</sup>	1.1	0.3
32	31	Kuwait	7.8	-8.8	14	4.9	3.6	0.3
33	29	Greece	7.7	-17	51	3.2	2.4	0.3
34	34	Belgium	7.6	5.2	44	1.2	1.0	0.3
35	46	Finland	7.3	54	92	2.4	1.5	0.3
36	37	Switzerland	6.3	2.9	28	0.7	0.6	0.3
37	36	Oman	5.9	0.1	-34	5.4	8.9	0.2
38	35	Thailand	5.8	-6.5	0.6	1.2	1.4	0.2
39	40	Romania	5.6	-4.7	95	1.6	1.3	0.2
40	43	Chile	5.5	4.9	4.8	1.6	2.0	0.2
<b>Subtotal top 40</b>			<b>2 264</b>	..	..	..	..	<b>93</b>
<b>World</b>			<b>2 443</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>100</b>

.. = data not available or not applicable; [] = estimated figure; GDP = gross domestic product.

<sup>a</sup> Rankings for 2022 are based on updated military expenditure figures in the current edition of the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database. They may therefore differ from the rankings for 2022 given in *SIPRI Yearbook 2023* and in other SIPRI publications released in 2023.

<sup>b</sup> The figures for military expenditure as a share of GDP are based on estimates of 2023 GDP from the International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook and International Financial Statistics databases.

<sup>c</sup> Denmark's military spending as a share of GDP was 1.95% in 2023, which is rounded here to 2.0%.

Sources: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2024; International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, Oct. 2023; and International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics Database, Sep. 2023.



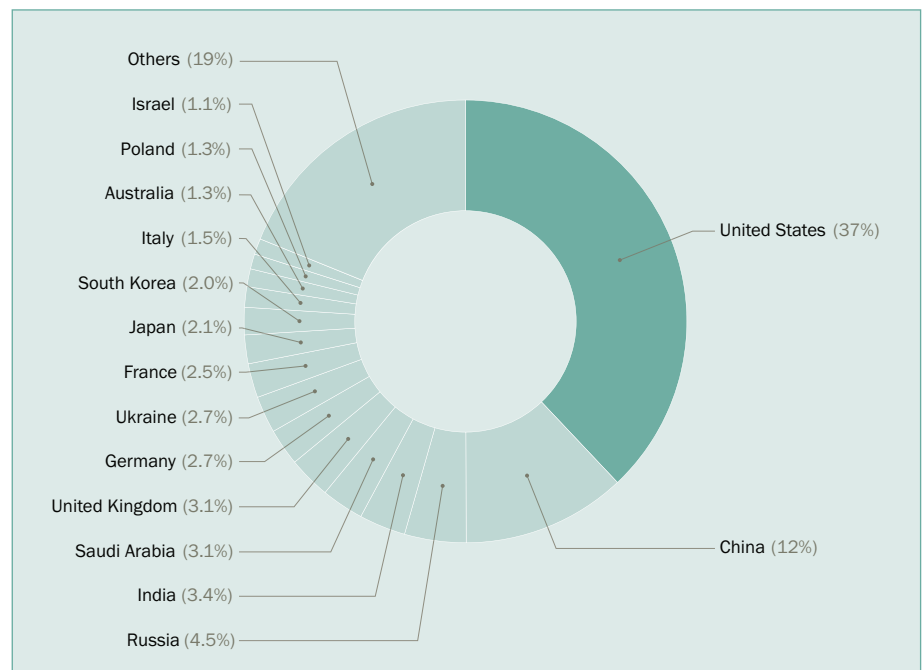
## THE WORLD'S LARGEST MILITARY SPENDERS IN 2023

World military expenditure is highly concentrated among a relatively small group of states (see table 1). The two largest spenders, the United States and China, accounted for around half of global military spending in 2023 (see figure 2). Together, the top 10 in 2023 accounted for almost three quarters (74 per cent) of the world total, or \$1799 billion, which was \$105 billion more than the previous year. In 2023 all countries in the top 10 increased their military spending. The biggest percentage increase among this group was in Ukraine. Its military spending went up by 51 per cent to \$64.8 billion and it moved from 11th largest spender in 2022 to 8th largest in 2023.

The military burden of every country in the top 10 grew in 2023. The largest increase was in Ukraine, where military spending as a share of GDP rose by 11 percentage points to reach 37 per cent. This was followed by Russia with an increase of 1.2 percentage points in its military burden to 5.9 per cent of GDP. Military spending as a share of government expenditure, which can be seen as a measure of government priorities, increased in 9 of the top 10 spenders in 2023 (the only decrease was in the USA). Among the top 10, military spending as a share of government expenditure was highest in Ukraine (58 per cent), followed by Saudi Arabia (24 per cent) and Russia (16 per cent). The most notable increases in 2023 were in Ukraine (+19 percentage points) and Russia (+3.2 percentage points).

US military spending was \$916 billion in 2023, which was 2.3 per cent more than in 2022 and 9.9 per cent more than in 2014. The USA remained by far the largest spender in the world, allocating 3.1 times more to the military than the second largest spender, China. The biggest percentage increase among all US military spending categories in 2023 was for 'research, development, test and evaluation' (RDT&E). The USA spent 9.4 per cent more in real terms on RDT&E than in 2022. The USA has prioritized RDT&E spending, in relative terms, over all other military spending categories since around 2014. This aligns with its decision to shift its focus away from counter-insurgency operations and asymmetric warfare to developing new weapon systems that could be used in a potential conflict with adversaries with advanced military capabilities.

Military aid to Ukraine was a highly debated topic in the USA in 2023. Funding allocations beyond those in the initial US Department of Defense budget were the main sources of US military spending related to Ukraine in 2023. They totalled \$35.7 billion in 2023,



**Figure 2.** The share of world military expenditure of the 15 countries with the highest spending in 2023

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2024.



of which \$25.4 billion was in the form of military aid—the largest amount of military aid given to Ukraine by any country that year. The remaining \$10.3 billion in Ukraine-related allocations included funds to support European allies and US command operations in Europe and to boost US munitions production capacity to replenish stocks sent to Ukraine and meet Ukraine’s ammunition needs.

China, the world’s second largest military spender, allocated an estimated \$296 billion to the military in 2023, an increase of 6.0 per cent from 2022. China’s military expenditure accounted for 12 per cent of global spending and 50 per cent of spending in Asia and Oceania. Aside from being the biggest spender in Asia and Oceania, China is the main driver of spending trends elsewhere in the region since many of its neighbours perceive China’s growing military power as a reason to enhance their own military capabilities.

China’s military expenditure has risen consecutively for 29 years, the longest unbroken streak recorded by any country in the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database. However, the rate of military spending growth has slowed over the past 10 years: China recorded an increase of 60 per cent in 2014–23 compared with increases of just under 150 per cent in 2004–13 and 1994–2003. This also reflects the slower rate of Chinese economic growth during the past decade. China recorded single-digit growth in its military spending for the 11th consecutive year in 2023, which was largely in line with its annual GDP growth over the same period.

At an estimated \$109 billion, Russian military expenditure in 2023 was 24 per cent higher than in 2022 and 57 per cent higher than in 2014, when Russia annexed Crimea. In 2023 Russia’s military spending was equivalent to 5.9 per cent of GDP and 16 per cent of total government expenditure, which were the highest levels recorded by Russia since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Figures for Russia’s military expenditure in 2023 are highly uncertain due to the increasing opaqueness of Russian financial authorities since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. In addition to the state budget, funding to support the invasion has come from off-budget revenue streams such as businesses, individuals and organizations. While these contributions are probably modest compared with the official budget, the lack of information about them means that SIPRI’s military expenditure figures for Russia are underestimates.

The increase in Russian military expenditure in 2023 was largely facilitated by Russia’s economic performance, which surpassed expectations despite a significant fall in the country’s oil and gas revenue. Russia has relied on its sovereign wealth fund and state loans to finance its expanding budget deficit, which has allowed it to limit the impact of its full-scale invasion of Ukraine on its economy.

In its draft budget for 2023, published in September 2022, Russia increased the amount allocated to ‘national security and public order’ by 50 per cent compared with 2022. This suggests that Russia expected the war in Ukraine to have wound down significantly during 2023 with a subsequent transition towards control of annexed territory. In a possible reassessment of the state of the full-scale invasion, in December 2022 Russia issued a revised 2023 budget that increased funding to ‘national security and public order’ by only 21 per cent compared with 2022. Based on the draft state budget for the years



2024–26, published in 2023, Russian military spending is expected to continue to rise in the coming years.

With military expenditure of \$83.6 billion in 2023, India was the fourth largest spender globally. Indian spending was up by 4.2 per cent from 2022 and by 44 per cent from 2014. The increase in India's military spending was mainly a result of growing personnel and operations costs, which made up almost 80 per cent of the total military budget in 2023. This aligns with the government's priority to strengthen the operational readiness of the armed forces amid ongoing tensions with China and Pakistan. In comparison, capital outlays to fund military procurement remained relatively stable, at around 22 per cent of the budget in 2023. A total of 75 per cent of these outlays went towards equipment produced domestically, which was the highest level ever and up from 68 per cent in the previous year. The continued shift towards domestic procurement reflects India's goal of becoming self-reliant in arms development and production.

Saudi Arabia was the fifth biggest military spender globally in 2023. Its spending rose by 4.3 per cent to an estimated \$75.8 billion, or 7.1 per cent of GDP. Saudi Arabia is the world's largest exporter of crude oil, and the growth in its military spending in 2023 was partly financed on the back of increased demand for non-Russian oil and rising oil prices following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

## REGIONAL TRENDS

Countries in the Americas accounted for 41 per cent of the world's military spending in 2023 (see table 2), followed by countries in Asia and Oceania (24 per cent), Europe (24 per cent), the Middle East (8.2 per cent) and Africa (2.1 per cent).

### Africa

Military expenditure in Africa totalled \$51.6 billion in 2023. It was 22 per cent higher than in 2022 and 1.5 per cent higher than in 2014.

At \$28.5 billion in 2023, military expenditure by North African countries was up by 38 per cent from 2022 (see figure 3) and by 41 per cent from 2014. Algeria and Morocco are by far the largest spenders in the subregion, together accounting for 82 per cent of North African military expenditure in 2023. Algeria's military spending grew by 76 per cent to reach \$18.3 billion. This was the highest level of expenditure ever recorded by Algeria and the largest annual increase in its spending since 1974. The increase was facilitated by a sharp rise in revenue from gas exports to countries in Europe as they moved away from Russian supplies. In contrast, Morocco's military spending decreased for the second consecutive year. It fell by 2.5 per cent in 2023, to \$5.2 billion.

Military expenditure in sub-Saharan Africa reached \$23.1 billion in 2023, which was 8.9 per cent higher than in 2022 but 22 per cent lower than in 2014. The rise in 2023 can be attributed to the 20 per cent increase in spending by Nigeria—the subregion's biggest military spender—and notable increases in spending by several other countries including the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and South Sudan.

**Table 2. Military expenditure in 2023, by region and subregion**

Spending figures are in US dollars, at current prices and exchange rates. Changes are in real terms, based on constant (2022) US dollars. Percentages below 10 are rounded to 1 decimal place; those over 10 are rounded to whole numbers. Figures and percentage shares may not add up to stated totals or subtotals due to the conventions of rounding.

Region and subregion	Spending (\$ b.), 2023	Change in spending (%)		Share of world spending (%), 2023
		2022–23	2014–23	
<b>World</b>	<b>2 443</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Africa</i> <sup>a</sup>	51.6	22	1.5	2.1
North Africa	28.5	38	41	1.2
Sub-Saharan Africa <sup>a</sup>	23.1	8.9	-22	0.9
<i>Americas</i> <sup>b</sup>	1 009	2.2	10	41
Central America and the Caribbean <sup>b</sup>	14.7	-0.4	54	0.6
North America	943	2.4	11	39
South America	50.7	-0.3	-7.2	2.1
<i>Asia and Oceania</i> <sup>c</sup>	595	4.4	46	24
Central Asia <sup>d</sup>	1.8	-5.3	-16	0.1
East Asia <sup>e</sup>	411	6.2	52	17
Oceania	35.5	-0.9	36	1.5
South Asia	98.2	2.2	38	4.0
South East Asia <sup>f</sup>	47.8	-1.6	24	2.0
<i>Europe</i>	588	16	62	24
Central and Western Europe	407	10	43	17
Eastern Europe	181	31	118	7.4
<i>Middle East</i> <sup>g</sup>	(200)	9.0	5.9	(8.2)

() = uncertain estimate.

<sup>a</sup> Figures exclude Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia.

<sup>b</sup> Figures exclude Cuba.

<sup>c</sup> Figures exclude Laos, North Korea, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

<sup>d</sup> Figures exclude Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

<sup>e</sup> Figures exclude North Korea.

<sup>f</sup> Figures exclude Laos.

<sup>g</sup> Figures exclude Syria and Yemen.

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2024.

Nigeria's military spending was \$3.2 billion in 2023. This included a supplementary budget that boosted the regular military budget by an additional 34 per cent. The latest increase in Nigerian military spending comes against the backdrop of numerous ongoing security challenges.

In 2023 the DRC recorded the biggest percentage increase in military spending in the world. Its spending more than doubled (+105 per cent) to reach \$794 million. The 2023 increase coincided with growing tensions with Rwanda, a surge in clashes with non-state armed groups, and a move by the government to strengthen the DRC's armed forces after it demanded the early withdrawal of a large-scale United Nations peacekeeping mission in the country.

South Sudan recorded the second highest percentage increase in military spending globally in 2023. Its spending rose by 78 per cent to reach \$1.1 billion. This followed a 108 per cent increase in 2022. The growth in spending can be attributed to escalating internal violence and the security challenges that have spilled over from the civil war in neighbouring Sudan.





## The Americas

Military spending by countries in the Americas reached \$1009 billion in 2023, which was 2.2 per cent higher than in 2022 and 10 per cent higher than in 2014.

North American military spending totalled \$943 billion in 2023. It was up by 2.4 per cent from 2022 and by 11 per cent from 2014. At \$27.2 billion in 2023, Canada's military spending was 6.6 per cent more than in 2022 and 49 per cent more than in 2014. Canada's military burden was 1.3 per cent of GDP in 2023, still some way short of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military spending target of 2 per cent of GDP.

Military spending in Central America and the Caribbean fell marginally (−0.4 per cent) to \$14.7 billion in 2023. However, spending went up by 54 per cent over the decade 2014–23. Rising crime levels have led to increased use of military forces against criminal gangs by some countries in the subregion, most notably Mexico. Mexican military expenditure reached \$11.8 billion in 2023. Spending fell by 1.5 per cent between 2022 and 2023, but has risen by 55 per cent since 2014. Allocations to the Guardia Nacional (National Guard)—a militarized force used to curb criminal activity—have grown from 0.7 per cent of Mexico's total military expenditure in 2019, when the force was created, to 11 per cent in 2023.

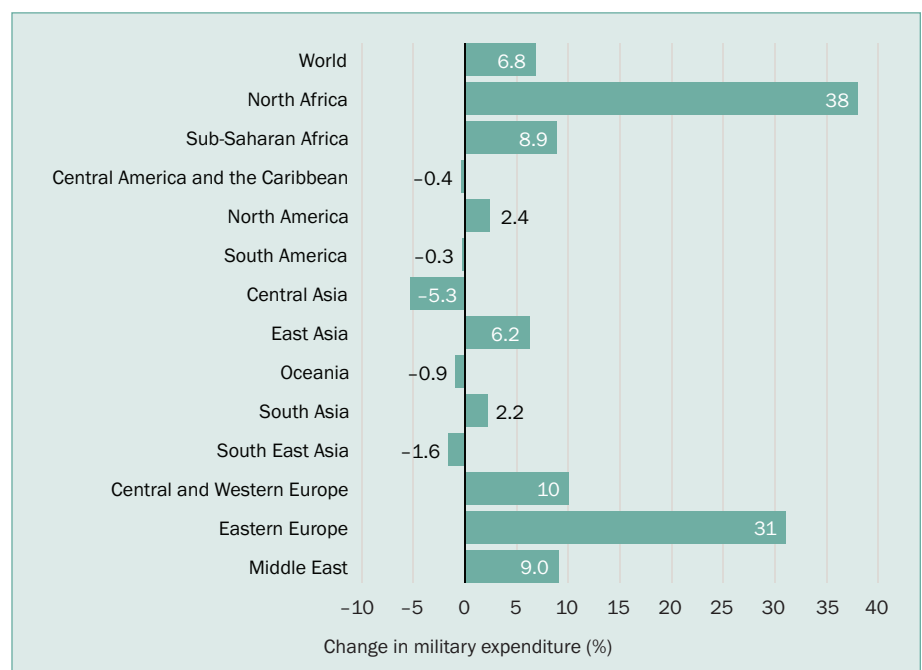
The Dominican Republic increased its military expenditure by 14 per cent in 2023, to \$893 million. Its military spending has risen sharply in recent years in response to security challenges that have spilled over the border from neighbouring Haiti, which has been embroiled in a political crisis since the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021.

At \$50.7 billion in 2023, military spending in South America was almost unchanged (−0.3 per cent) from 2022. Brazil is the largest spender in the subregion. Its spending reached \$22.9 billion after an increase of 3.1 per cent in 2023, which was President Luís Inácio Lula da Silva's first year in office.

Although Brazil is not part of NATO, members of the Brazilian National Congress cited the organization's spending target when submitting a constitutional amendment to the Senate in 2023 that aims to increase Brazil's military burden to an annual minimum of 2 per cent of GDP. Brazil's military burden in 2023 was 1.1 per cent of GDP.

## Asia and Oceania

Total military spending in Asia and Oceania in 2023 amounted to \$595 billion, up by 4.4 per cent



**Figure 3.** Changes in military expenditure, by subregion, 2022–23

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2024.

**Box 1. NATO and the push for further increases in military expenditure**

In 2023 the combined military spending of the 31 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members reached \$1341 billion—up by 5.2 per cent from 2022 and by 19 per cent from 2014.<sup>a</sup> Total NATO military expenditure accounted for 55 per cent of world military spending in 2023. The increase over the decade 2014–23 was due partly to new members joining NATO (Montenegro in 2017, North Macedonia in 2020 and Finland in 2023) and partly to a general upward trend in military spending.

All but three NATO members increased their military expenditure in 2023. Spending fell in Greece (–17 per cent), Italy (–5.9 per cent) and Romania (–4.7 per cent). European NATO members together accounted for 28 per cent of total NATO spending in 2023, which was the highest level recorded in the decade 2014–23.

In 2014 NATO members committed to spending 2 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) on the military by 2024. In 2023 they revised this target to ‘at least’ 2 per cent of GDP. Eleven of the 31 NATO members met or exceeded the 2 per cent target in 2023, which was 4 more than in 2022 and the highest number since the spending commitment was introduced. NATO members’ average military burden stood at 1.9 per cent of GDP in 2023. Only 3 of the 31 NATO members did not increase their military burden between 2014 and 2023: Türkiye (–0.4 percentage points), the United States (–0.3) and Croatia (–0.04).

In 2014 NATO members also agreed that, by 2024, they would allocate 20 per cent or more of their total annual military spending to procuring major equipment. A total of 28 NATO members met the target in 2023, up from 7 in 2014. Between 2014 and 2023, NATO members’ average share of military spending dedicated to major equipment more than doubled, to reach 28 per cent.

<sup>a</sup> Sweden’s application to join NATO was not formally ratified until March 2024. Its military expenditure is therefore excluded from SIPRI data for NATO for 2023.

SIPRI’s methodology for calculating military expenditure differs from that used by NATO for its annual data. As a result, SIPRI’s data may not exactly match the data published by NATO.

from 2022 and by 46 per cent from 2014. This continued an uninterrupted upward trend dating back to at least 1989. The regional increase was primarily driven by China and its neighbours: military spending rose in all countries in East Asia as well as in India.

Military expenditure in East Asia grew by 6.2 per cent in 2023, to reach \$411 billion. Japan allocated \$50.2 billion to its military in 2023, which was 11 per cent more than in 2022 and 31 per cent more than in 2014. The year-on-year increase in 2023 was the largest since 1972. The budget for 2023 also marked the first year of Japan’s biggest military build-up programme since the end of World War II. Under the programme, Japan aims to bolster its counterstrike capabilities by investing heavily in aircraft, ships and long-range missiles. It plans to spend \$310 billion on the military in 2023–27, which would give it an average annual military budget of \$62 billion over the period.

South Korea’s military expenditure went up by 1.1 per cent in 2023, to \$47.9 billion. In 2023 the South Korean Ministry of National Defense unveiled a new spending plan to allocate around \$253 billion to the military between 2023 and 2027, at an average of just over \$50 billion per year.

Taiwan’s military expenditure grew by 11 per cent in 2023, to \$16.6 billion. Based on a perceived growing threat from China, Taiwan created an extra-budgetary fund in 2020 and another in 2022 earmarked for procuring F-16 combat aircraft and naval systems. Together, these funds accounted for 21 per cent of Taiwan’s total military spending in 2023.

**Europe**

Military spending in Europe totalled \$588 billion in 2023, which was 16 per cent more than in 2022 and 62 per cent more than in 2014. The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine has led to substantial increases in military spending by both countries and spurred a widespread surge in military expenditure across Europe.





Military spending in Central and Western Europe reached \$407 billion in 2023, up by 10 per cent from 2022 and by 43 per cent from 2014. The United Kingdom remained the largest military spender in the subregion in 2023. At \$74.9 billion, its spending was 7.9 per cent higher than in 2022 and 14 per cent higher than in 2014. The UK's military burden was 2.3 per cent of GDP in 2023. During the year, the British government announced a long-term plan to raise the UK's military burden to 2.5 per cent of GDP.

In 2023 Germany's military expenditure grew for the second consecutive year to reach \$66.8 billion. German spending went up by 9.0 per cent in 2023 and by 48 per cent over the decade 2014–23. In early 2022 the German government committed to meeting NATO's military spending target of 2 per cent of GDP 'as an average over a multi-year period' by 2025. It aimed to achieve this partly through an extra-budgetary fund established in 2022. In late 2023 the government revised its spending plan and announced that it intended to meet the 2 per cent target annually from 2024 onwards. Germany's military burden in 2023 was 1.5 per cent of GDP.

Poland's military spending was \$31.6 billion after growing by 75 per cent between 2022 and 2023, which was by far the largest annual increase by any European country. Polish military expenditure was 181 per cent higher in 2023 than in 2014. Poland's spending in 2023 was partly financed through an off-budget funding mechanism established in 2022. This fund accounted for 27 per cent of the country's total military spending in 2023. Poland's military burden increased by 1.6 percentage points during the year to 3.8 per cent of GDP, but this was still short of the Polish government's declared goal of reaching 4 per cent of GDP in 2023.

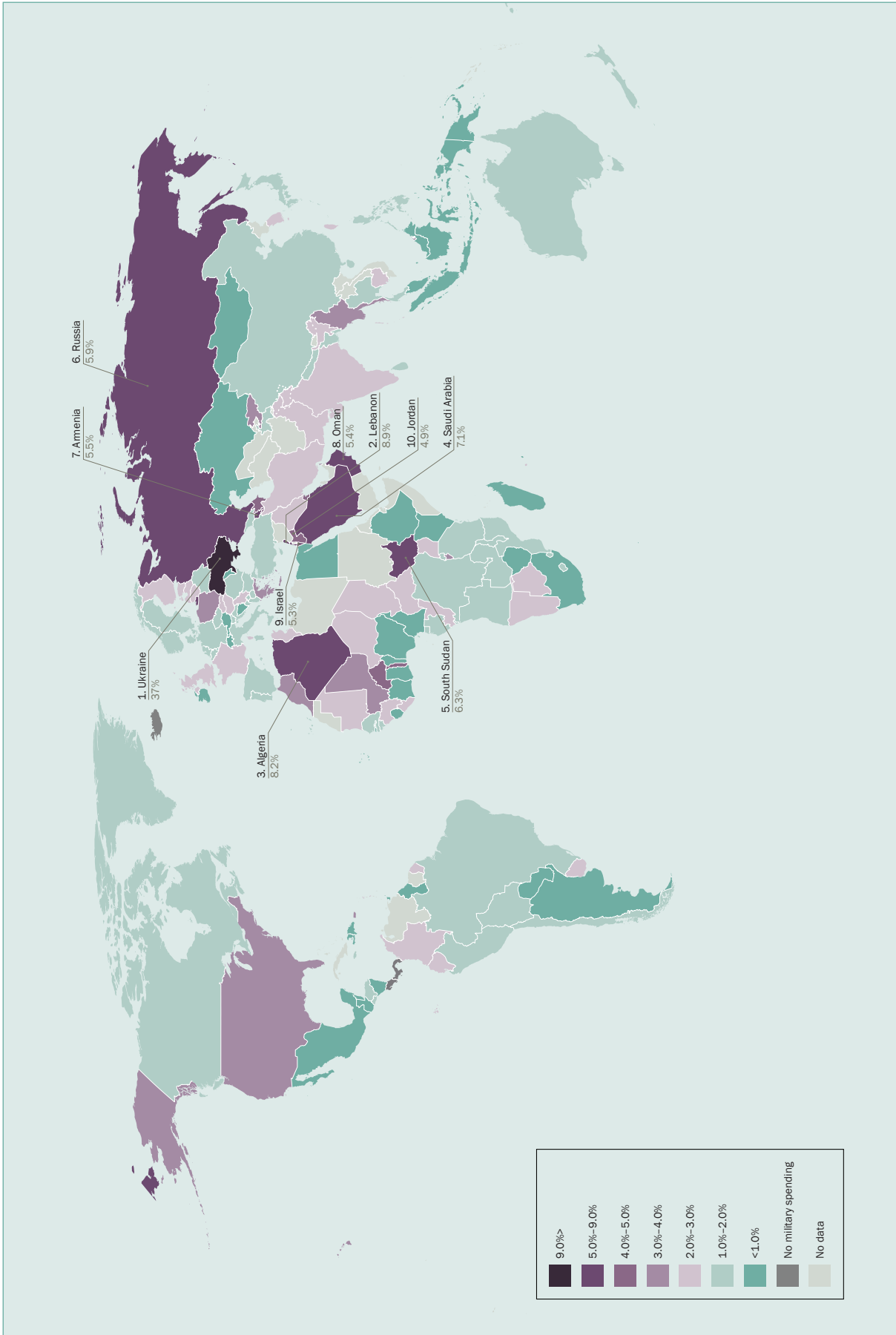
Finland became the 31st member of NATO in April 2023 (see box 1). In 2023 Finnish military spending went up by 54 per cent to \$7.3 billion, or 2.4 per cent of GDP. The increase was mainly due to Finland tripling its procurement spending in 2023 with the aim of improving its military capabilities, which includes acquiring F-35 combat aircraft and air defence systems and replacing the weapons that it has given to Ukraine.

In 2023 military spending in Eastern Europe increased by 31 per cent to reach \$181 billion—its highest level since 1990. The surge in spending was driven by the substantial growth in Russian and Ukrainian military spending in the second year of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Military expenditure in Eastern Europe grew by 118 per cent over the decade 2014–23.

Ukraine became the world's eighth biggest military spender in 2023. Its military expenditure rose by 51 per cent to reach \$64.8 billion in 2023, equivalent to 59 per cent of Russia's military spending that year. Ukrainian military expenditure increased by 1272 per cent between 2014 and 2023.

Ukraine received military aid from over 30 countries in 2023. The main donors were the USA and the UK as well as Germany and other European Union (EU) member states. Military aid to Ukraine is estimated to have totalled at least \$35 billion in 2023, of which \$25.4 billion came from the USA. SIPRI includes military aid in the spending estimate of the donor country and not the beneficiary country, which means that this \$35 billion is not included in the total for Ukraine.

In 2023 Ukrainian military expenditure accounted for 58 per cent of government spending. Since the full-scale invasion by Russia in 2022, Ukraine has supported its annual budget with a combination of increased taxation,



**Figure 4. Military spending as a share of gross domestic product, by country, 2023**

Notes: The 10 countries with the highest military spending as a share of gross domestic product are labelled. The boundaries used in this map do not imply any endorsement or acceptance by SIPRI.

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2024.



debt and international financial assistance. As Ukraine has allocated more and more of its resources to the military, it has become increasingly reliant on international financial assistance to cover the funding gap for non-military matters. This funding gap reached an estimated \$40 billion in 2023. The EU and US financial assistance packages provided to Ukraine in 2022 and 2023 have been critical to freeing up resources for Ukraine to allocate to its military.

### The Middle East

Military expenditure in the Middle East rose by 9.0 per cent to an estimated \$200 billion in 2023. This was the biggest annual increase in the decade 2014–23. Spending went up in the three largest military spenders in the region: Saudi Arabia, Israel and Türkiye.

Israel's military spending grew by 24 per cent to reach \$27.5 billion in 2023. The spending increase was mainly driven by Israel's large-scale offensive in Gaza in response to the attack on southern Israel by Hamas in October 2023. Israel's monthly military expenditure has risen substantially since the start of the war in Gaza: it went up from an average of \$1.8 billion per month before October to \$4.7 billion in December 2023.

Iran was the fourth largest military spender in the Middle East in 2023. Its spending went up marginally (+0.6 per cent) to \$10.3 billion. According to available data, the share of total military spending allocated to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has been increasing since at least 2019. Spending on the IRGC rose from 27 per cent of Iran's total military expenditure in 2019 to 37 per cent in 2023. In addition, spending linked to the procurement of aircraft from Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industrial Corporation (HESA) increased by 27 per cent over the same period. Among other things, HESA produces uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAVs) used by the IRGC.

### MILITARY SPENDING AS A SHARE OF GDP

A country's military expenditure as a share of GDP—also known as the military burden—is the simplest measure of the relative economic cost of the military on the country (see figure 4). The global military burden is estimated to have risen from 2.2 per cent of GDP in 2022 to 2.3 per cent in 2023.

On average, states in the Middle East had the highest military burden in 2023, at 4.2 per cent of GDP, followed by states in Europe (2.8 per cent), Africa (1.9 per cent), Asia and Oceania (1.7 per cent) and the Americas (1.2 per cent).

In 2023 the average military burden grew substantially for states in Europe (+0.5 percentage points), the Middle East (+0.5) and Africa (+0.2). The average military burden was unchanged for states in the Americas, and Asia and Oceania.

The largest increase in military burden in 2023 was in Ukraine (+11 percentage points). Other notable military burden increases in Europe included Poland (+1.6 percentage points), Armenia (+1.4), Russia (+1.2), Finland (+0.8), Azerbaijan (+0.8), Estonia (+0.7) and Denmark (+0.6). Lebanon (+6.0 percentage points), Israel (+0.9) and Saudi Arabia (+0.7) had the biggest military burden increases in the Middle East. By far the largest increase in military burden in Africa was in Algeria (+3.5 percentage points).

**SIPRI** is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

## GOVERNING BOARD

Stefan Löfven, Chair (Sweden)

Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas  
(Ghana)

Ambassador Chan Heng Chee  
(Singapore)

Jean-Marie Guéhenno (France)

Dr Radha Kumar (India)

Dr Patricia Lewis (Ireland/  
United Kingdom)

Dr Jessica Tuchman Mathews  
(United States)

## DIRECTOR

Dan Smith (United Kingdom)



**STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL  
PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

Signalistgatan 9

SE-169 72 Solna, Sweden

Telephone: +46 8 655 97 00

Email: [sipri@sipri.org](mailto:sipri@sipri.org)

Internet: [www.sipri.org](http://www.sipri.org)

## The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, sources and methods

The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database provides military expenditure data by country for the years 1949–2023 in local current prices, constant United States dollars, current US dollars, as a share of gross domestic product (GDP), per capita and as a share of general government expenditure. The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database was updated on 22 April 2024 and this version replaces all previous versions of the database. The database and further details on the definitions, sources and methods used are available at <https://doi.org/10.55163/CQGC9685>.

All figures for spending in 2023 are given in 2023 current US dollars. Figures for relative increases or decreases in military spending—often described as changes in ‘real terms’ or adjusted for inflation—are expressed in constant (2022) US dollars.

### Definitions

Where possible, SIPRI military expenditure data includes all current and capital expenditure on: (a) the armed forces, including peacekeeping forces; (b) defence ministries and other government agencies engaged in defence projects; (c) paramilitary forces, when judged to be trained and equipped for military operations; and (d) military space activities. This data should include expenditure on personnel—which encompasses salaries of military and civil personnel and pensions and social services of military personnel—as well as expenditure on operations and maintenance, procurement, military research and development and military aid (in the military expenditure of the donor country). The estimated military aid to Ukraine in this year’s fact sheet includes financial contributions, training and operational costs, replacement costs of the military equipment stocks donated to Ukraine and payments to procure additional military equipment for the Ukrainian armed forces. It does not include the estimated value of military equipment stocks donated to Ukraine.

Civil defence and current expenditures on previous military activities, such as veterans’ benefits, demobilization, conversion, weapon destruction and military involvement in non-military activities (e.g. policing) are excluded from the data set.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Nan Tian** (South Africa) is the Acting Programme Director and a Senior Researcher with the SIPRI Military Expenditure and Arms Production Programme. **Diego Lopes da Silva** (Brazil) is a Senior Researcher, **Xiao Liang** (China) is a Researcher and **Lorenzo Scarazzato** (Italy) is a Research Assistant with the programme.