How many troops does NATO have?

NATO's 32 members had about 3.32 million military personnel in 2025, by the alliance's own estimate. Two in five are American; the rest belong to European allies and Canada.

NATO does not own these troops, and a headcount is not a deployable army.

The count

Every year NATO publishes military personnel for each ally, using a common definition. The latest edition, released in July 2026, gives these totals:

- **All 32 allies:** 3.32 million in 2025, an estimated 3.44 million in 2026.
- **United States:** 1.30 million in 2025.
- **European allies and Canada:** 2.02 million in 2025; without Canada's 71,000, about 1.95 million for European allies alone.

The biggest European forces in 2025 were Türkiye (377,000), Poland (238,000) and France (202,000); at the other end, Estonia counted under 8,000.

After a decade with little change, 3.23 million in 2014 and 3.21 million in 2024, NATO expects 3.44 million in 2026. The fastest growth is on the eastern flank: Poland's force has more than doubled since 2014 and is projected at 264,000 for 2026. The European picture in more detail is in How many soldiers does Europe have?

NATO has almost no troops of its own

What NATO owns outright is small: a fleet of 14 AWACS radar planes with crews from 19 countries, five RQ-4D surveillance drones, headquarters and their staffs. Everything else belongs to member states. Governments assign units to NATO plans and hand them to NATO commanders for a mission, and they can take them back.

That is why the more telling figure is readiness. In 2022 the allies agreed a new force model and set a goal of more than 300,000 troops at high readiness. In June 2024 NATO said it had 500,000 across land, sea and air. In NATO's readiness tiers, the first forces move within ten days, the next within thirty and the rest within six months.

On the eastern flank

NATO keeps nine multinational battlegroups from Finland to Bulgaria, each led by a framework nation: the United States in Poland, Germany in Lithuania, the United Kingdom in Estonia, Canada in Latvia and Sweden in Finland, among others. Several are growing into brigades. Germany's brigade in Lithuania, the first German brigade permanently stationed abroad since the Second World War, is to reach up to 5,000 soldiers by 2027.

American forces in Europe number about 80,000, according to US European Command. That figure is shrinking: in October 2025 the US Army said a brigade rotating through Romania would not be replaced, and in May 2026 the Pentagon announced that some 5,000 troops would leave Germany.

What the number means

NATO's 3.32 million is more than twice Russia's authorized strength of 1.55 million; the comparison by people, money and troops is in Is NATO bigger than Russia?. What limits Europe is organization, and whether it could defend itself without the US turns on it. What Europe spends to keep these forces is in European defence in numbers.

All questions →

FREQUENTLY ASKED

How many soldiers does NATO have in total?

About 3.32 million military personnel across its 32 members in 2025, by NATO's own estimate, rising to 3.44 million in 2026. The United States accounts for 1.30 million; the European allies and Canada for 2.02 million. These are national forces; NATO itself owns almost none.

Which NATO country has the largest army?
The United States, with 1.30 million military personnel in 2025. In Europe the largest forces are Türkiye (377,000), Poland (238,000), France (202,000), Italy (185,000) and Germany (182,000), on NATO's count. Poland has grown fastest: from 99,000 in 2014 to an estimated 264,000 in 2026.

How many NATO troops are at high readiness?
NATO said in 2024 that it had 500,000 troops at high readiness across land, sea and air, against a goal of more than 300,000 set in 2022. They remain national forces, assigned to NATO plans and ready to move within days to weeks.

How many US troops are in Europe?
About 80,000, according to US European Command in May 2026, when the Pentagon announced that some 5,000 would leave Germany over six to twelve months. The figure changes with rotations; in October 2025 the US Army said a brigade rotating through Romania would not be replaced.

How many NATO troops are on the border with Russia?
NATO keeps nine multinational battlegroups on its eastern flank, from Finland to Bulgaria, several now growing to brigade size; Germany's brigade in Lithuania is to reach up to 5,000 by 2027. NATO does not publish a single total for the forces deployed there.

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