

April 2024 Europe's (Germany and Poland, in particular) military readiness

It is clear that all NATO and European countries are upping their respective military preparedness. Indeed, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius stated that Germany is completely overhauling its military, costing €6.5 billion alone in the next six months – the biggest change since the end of the Cold War. This is and will be a massive boon for domestic and foreign Defence companies and contractors. Germany is adding a fourth branch to its existing army, air force and navy: a cyber and information unit, merging all four areas into a central command structure that controls all four branches. There are consistent rumours as well that compulsory military conscription may return. Germany's annual defence budget is now €72 billion, ranking it 7th globally, behind the US, China, Russia, India, Saudi Arabia and the UK.

The German government has become increasingly open regarding its concern that, in the future, Russia may have designs on the Baltic States and, geographically at least, this Russo-NATO conflict would likely pan out on Germany's doorstep. Poland, also geographically adjacent, has recently stepped up its defence budget to over 4% of GDP, far ahead of most EU and NATO allies. Even with the recent change of government in Poland towards a more centrist stance, the new Polish prime minister, Donald Tusk, unambiguously stated last week that Europe is entering a "prewar" era, cautioning that the continent is not ready and urging European countries to step up defence investment. In an interview with a group of European newspapers reported by the BBC, Tusk said: "I don't want to scare anyone, but war is no longer a concept from the past. It's real and it started over two years ago."

Hence, Germany's acceleration towards this major and arguably long overdue military transformation which aligns with the country's pre-eminent economic status within the EU. Germany's pockets are deeper than all of its European allies and this fact alone may prove vital for the West if Mr Tusk's gloomy statement reaches a sad fruition.

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