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TRENDS IN WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURE, 2020

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World military expenditure in 2020 is estimated to have been $1981 billion, the highest level since 1988—the earliest year for which SIPRI has a consistent estimate for total global military spending. World military expenditure in 2020 was 2.6 per cent higher in real terms than in 2019 and 9.3 per cent higher than in 2011 (see figure 1). The global military burden—world military expenditure as a share of global gross domestic product (GDP)—rose by 0.2 percentage points in 2020, to 2.4 per cent. This increase was largely due to the fact that most countries in the world experienced severe economic downturns in 2020 related to the Covid-19 pandemic, while military expenditure continued to rise overall (see box 1).

This Fact Sheet highlights the regional and national military expenditure data for 2020 and trends over the decade 2011–20. The data is from the updated open-access SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, which provides military spending data by country for the years 1949–2020.



Figure 1. World military expenditure, by region, 1988–2020

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

Rough estimates for the Middle East are included in the world totals for 2015–20.

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2021.

KEY FACTS

- **World military expenditure was $1981 billion in 2020, an increase of 2.6 per cent on 2019 in real terms.**
- **Total military spending accounted for 2.4 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020.**
- **The five biggest spenders in 2020 were the United States, China, India, Russia and the United Kingdom, which together accounted for 62 per cent of world military spending.**
- **US military expenditure grew by 4.4 per cent in 2020, to $778 billion. China (1.9 per cent), India (2.1 per cent), Russia (2.5 per cent) and the UK (2.9 per cent) all increased their military spending in 2020.**
- **In 2020 military expenditure increased in Africa (5.1 per cent), Europe (4.0 per cent), the Americas (3.9 per cent), and Asia and Oceania (2.5 per cent). The total military expenditure of the 11 countries in the Middle East for which data is available decreased by 6.5 per cent.**
- **The military burden increased across all regions in 2020. The military burden was an average of 1.5 per cent of GDP for countries in the Americas; 1.8 per cent for Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Europe; and 4.9 per cent for the countries in the Middle East for which data is available.**

Table 1. The 40 countries with the highest military expenditure in 2020

Spending figures and GDP are in US dollars, at current prices and exchange rates. Changes are in real terms, based on constant (2019) 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 (%)		Spending as a share of GDP (%)[b]		World share (%),
2020	2019[a]	Country	2020	2019–20	2011–20	2020	2011	2020
1	1	United States	778	4.4	−10	3.7	4.8	39
2	2	China	[252]	1.9	76	[1.7]	[1.7]	[13]
3	3	India	72.9	2.1	34	2.9	2.7	3.7
4	4	Russia	61.7	2.5	26	4.3	3.4	3.1
5	6	United Kingdom	59.2	2.9	−4.2	2.2	2.5	3.0
Subtotal top 5			**1 224**	..	..	..	..	**62**
6	5	Saudi Arabia	[57.5]	−10	2.3	[8.4]	[7.2]	[2.9]
7	8	Germany	52.8	5.2	28	1.4	1.2	2.7
8	7	France	52.7	2.9	9.8	2.1	1.9	2.7
9	9	Japan	49.1	1.2	2.4	1.0	1.0	2.5
10	10	South Korea	45.7	4.9	41	2.8	2.5	2.3
Subtotal top 10			**1 482**	..	..	..	..	**75**
11	11	Italy	28.9	7.5	−3.3	1.6	1.5	1.5
12	12	Australia	27.5	5.9	33	2.1	1.8	1.4
13	14	Canada	22.8	2.9	26	1.4	1.2	1.1
14	16	Israel	21.7	2.7	32	5.6	5.8	1.1
15	13	Brazil	19.7	−3.1	2.1	1.4	1.4	1.0
Subtotal top 15			**1 603**	..	..	..	..	**81**
16	15	Turkey	17.7	−5.0	77	2.8	2.0	0.9
17	17	Spain	17.4	−0.2	0.6	1.4	1.3	0.9
18	18	Iran	15.8	−3.0	−23	2.2	2.4	0.8
19	20	Poland	13.0	8.7	60	2.2	1.8	0.7
20	19	Netherlands	12.6	1.8	15	1.4	1.3	0.6
21	21	Taiwan	12.2	5.5	12	1.9	2.1	0.6
22	22	Singapore	10.9	3.4	23	3.2	3.2	0.6
23	23	Pakistan	10.4	−2.8	55	4.0	3.3	0.5
24	24	Algeria	9.7	−3.4	30	6.7	4.3	0.5
25	26	Indonesia	9.4	5.4	83	0.9	0.7	0.5
26	25	Colombia	9.2	−0.3	28	3.4	3.1	0.5
27	30	Thailand	7.3	1.0	26	1.5	1.5	0.4
28	28	Norway	7.1	−0.1	37	1.9	1.5	0.4
29	27	Iraq	(7.0)	−8.0	47	(4.1)	(2.3)	(0.4)
30	29	Kuwait	6.9	−5.9	17	6.5	3.5	0.3
31	32	Oman	[6.7]	1.7	22	[11]	[7.4]	[0.3]
32	33	Sweden	6.5	6.8	34	1.2	1.1	0.3
33	31	Mexico	6.1	−0.7	36	0.6	0.5	0.3
34	35	Ukraine	[5.9]	11	198	[4.1]	[1.5]	[0.3]
35	39	Romania	5.7	21	178	2.3	1.3	0.3
36	37	Switzerland	5.7	6.1	23	0.8	0.7	0.3
37	38	Belgium	5.5	12	6.4	1.1	1.0	0.3
38	34	Greece	5.3	−4.3	−7.5	2.8	2.5	0.3
39	40	Denmark	5.0	6.2	24	1.4	1.3	0.3
40	45	Morocco	4.8	29	54	4.3	3.3	0.2
Subtotal top 40			**1 827**	..	..	..	..	**92**
World			**1 981**	**2.6**	**9.3**	**2.4**	**2.4**	**100**

.. = data not available or not applicable; ( ) = uncertain estimate; [ ] = SIPRI estimate; GDP = gross domestic product.

[a] Rankings for 2019 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 2019 given in *SIPRI Yearbook 2020* and in other SIPRI publications in 2020.

[b] The figures for military expenditure as a share of GDP are based on estimates of 2020 GDP from the International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook and International Financial Statistics databases.

Sources: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2021; International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, Oct. 2020; and International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics Database, Sep. 2020.

THE TOP 15 MILITARY SPENDERS IN 2020

Military expenditure by the top 15 countries reached $1603 billion in 2020 and accounted for 81 per cent of global military spending (see table 1). There were some changes in the composition and rank order of the top 15 between 2019 and 2020. Most notably, Israel entered the top 15 in place of Turkey, and the United Kingdom moved above Saudi Arabia—whose military spending fell by 10 per cent—to become the fifth largest spender in 2020.

All but three countries in the top 15 had higher military expenditure in 2020 than in 2011. The exceptions were the United States (–10 per cent), the UK (–4.2 per cent) and Italy (–3.3 per cent). China's increase in military spending of 76 per cent was by far the largest among the top 15 over the decade 2011–20. Other top 15 countries with substantial increases between 2011 and 2020 were South Korea (41 per cent), India (34 per cent), Australia (33 per cent) and Israel (32 per cent).

With a military budget of an estimated $778 billion, the USA remained the world's largest spender in 2020, accounting for 39 per cent of global military spending (see figure 2). In 2020 the USA spent almost as much on its military as the next 12 largest spenders combined. The US military burden amounted to 3.7 per cent of GDP in 2020, up by 0.3 percentage points on the previous year.

US military expenditure in 2020 was 4.4 per cent higher than in 2019. The 2020 financial year was the third consecutive year of growth in US military spending, following continuous real-terms decreases between 2010—when US spending peaked—and 2017. The increases in the financial years covering 2018–20 can be attributed to focused investment in research and development, and implementation of several long-term projects such as modernizing the US nuclear arsenal and large-scale arms procurement. The main drivers of the increases in recent years were perceived threats to the USA from strategic competitors such as China and Russia and the push by former US President Donald J. Trump to build up what he saw as a depleted military.

China, the world's second largest military spender in 2020, is estimated to have accounted for 13 per cent of the global total. The $252 billion spent on the military in 2020 was 1.9 per cent higher than in 2019 and amounted to 1.7 per cent of GDP. China's military expenditure has increased for 26 consecutive years. This growth is the result of China's long-term military modernization and expansion process. According to China's Ministry of National

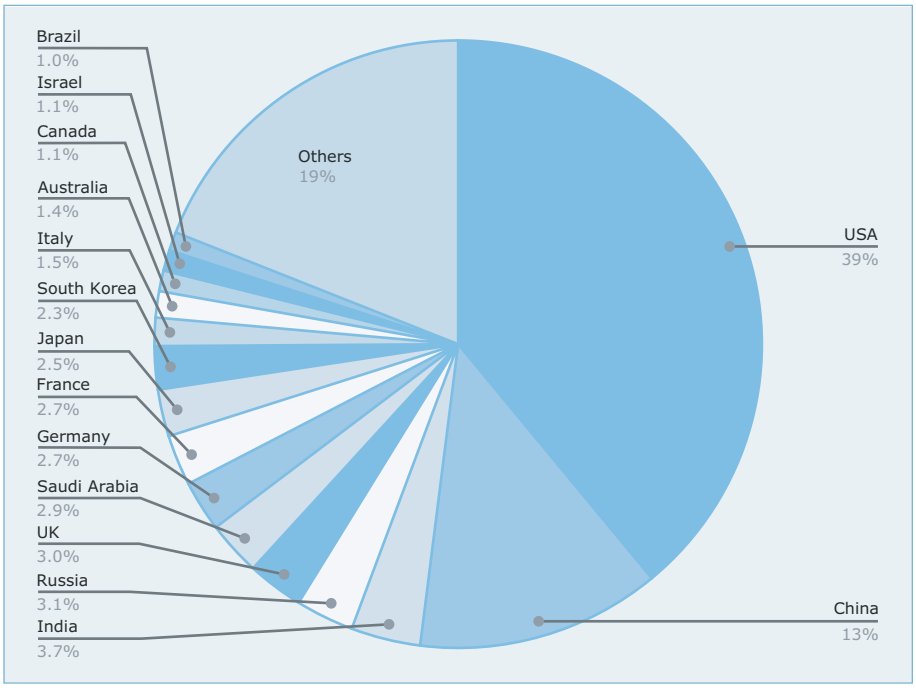


Figure 2. The share of world military expenditure of the 15 countries with the highest spending in 2020

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2021.

Table 2. Military expenditure, by region and subregion, 2020

Spending figures are in US dollars, at current prices and exchange rates. Changes are in real terms, based on constant (2019) 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.), 2020	Change (%)		World share (%), 2020
		2019–20	2011–20	
World	**1 981**	***2.6***	***9.3***	***100***
Africa[a]	(43.2)	*5.1*	*11*	*2.2*
North Africa	(24.7)	*6.4*	*42*	*1.2*
Sub-Saharan Africa[a]	18.5	*3.4*	*–13*	*0.9*
Americas[b]	853	*3.9*	*–8.4*	*43*
Central America and the Caribbean[b]	8.6	*–0.2*	*40*	*0.4*
North America	801	*4.3*	*–9.6*	*40*
South America	43.5	*–2.1*	*6.2*	*2.2*
Asia and Oceania[c]	528	*2.5*	*47*	*27*
Central Asia[d]	1.9	*–8.4*	*47*	*0.1*
East Asia[e]	359	*2.3*	*53*	*18*
Oceania	30.7	*5.6*	*35*	*1.6*
South Asia	90.1	*1.3*	*36*	*4.5*
South East Asia	45.5	*5.2*	*36*	*2.3*
Europe	378	*4.0*	*16*	*19*
Central Europe	33.6	*6.0*	*74*	*1.7*
Eastern Europe	71.7	*3.4*	*31*	*3.6*
Western Europe	273	*3.9*	*8.5*	*14*
Middle East[f]	. .	. .	. .	. .

. . = data not available or not applicable; ( ) = uncertain estimate.

[a] Figures exclude Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia.

[b] Figures exclude Cuba.

[c] Figures exclude North Korea, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

[d] Figures exclude Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

[e] Figures exclude North Korea.

[f] No SIPRI estimate for the Middle East is available for 2015–20. A rough estimate for the Middle East (excluding Syria) is included in the world total.

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2021.

Defense, the increase in 2020 was in part motivated by perceived threats to China's national security related to 'power politics'.

At $72.9 billion, India's military spending in 2020 was 2.1 per cent higher than in 2019 and 34 per cent higher than in 2011. This increase can be largely attributed to India's ongoing conflict with Pakistan over Kashmir and renewed border tensions with China, as well as India's more general rivalry with China as the main regional power in Asia and Oceania.

Russia's military expenditure was $61.7 billion in 2020, 2.5 per cent higher than in 2019 and 26 per cent higher than in 2011. The increases in Russian spending in 2019 and 2020 followed decreases in 2017 and 2018. Before 2017, Russia's military spending had risen for 18 straight years. Although Russia's military spending grew overall in 2020, the economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic appeared to have an immediate impact: Russia's actual military spending in 2020 was 6.6 per cent lower than its initial military budget.

Total military expenditure by all 29 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members was $1103 billion in 2020. Six of the top 15 military spenders are members of NATO: the USA, the UK, Germany, France, Italy and

Canada. Together, these six accounted for 90 per cent ($995 billion) of total NATO spending and 50 per cent of global military expenditure.

Among the top 15 spenders, the military burden increased between 2019 and 2020 in all countries except China. The GDPs of almost all the countries in the world decreased in 2020 largely as a result of the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In most countries this led to an increase in the military burden irrespective of whether their military spending rose or fell in 2020 (see box 1). The most notable increases in military burden among the top 15 spenders in 2020 included Saudi Arabia (+0.6 percentage points), Russia (+0.5 percentage points), Israel (+0.4 percentage points) and the USA (+0.3 percentage points).

REGIONAL TRENDS

World military expenditure is heavily concentrated in two of the world's five regions: in 2020 the Americas (43 per cent) and Asia and Oceania (27 per cent) together accounted for more than two-thirds of the global total (see table 2). Europe accounted for 19 per cent of global military expenditure in 2020, making it the third largest spending region. Africa had the smallest regional share, accounting for 2.2 per cent of global military expenditure. Military spending in the Middle East is estimated to have accounted for roughly 9.0 per cent of the world total in 2020 based on the limited data available for this region.

Africa

Military expenditure in Africa was an estimated $43.2 billion in 2020, 5.1 per cent higher than in 2019 and 11 per cent higher than in 2011.

Military spending by countries in North Africa rose by 6.4 per cent in 2020, to $24.7 billion. Military spending in the subregion has followed an

Box 1. Measuring global military expenditure in 2020 and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic

SIPRI's military expenditure data for 2020 shows widespread increases across the world, despite the fact that most countries recorded a decrease in gross domestic product (GDP) as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the general impact of the pandemic on military expenditure cannot yet be measured conclusively and will only become evident in future years. The pandemic has highlighted an important issue regarding the use and interpretation of military expenditure data for the most recent year or, in some cases, years: the difference between budgeted and actual spending.

Data on military expenditure is generally available in three forms: the initial budget, a revised budget and actual expenditure. The initial budget is adopted before the start of the new financial year and indicates the resources that a government plans to allocate to each governmental sector. A revised budget is released during the course of the financial year. Accounts of actual expenditure are published after the end of the financial year, reporting how much money has actually been spent.

In the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, data for the most recent year is most often available in the form of an initial or revised budget. Only a handful of countries will have published an actual expenditure figure for the previous year by mid February each year (when the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database is closed, meaning that no further changes can be made). Thus, data for the most recent year needs to be analysed with caution as further spending revisions are likely to occur. Such revisions would be reflected only in the next annual update of the database.

Similarly, data provided by the International Monetary Fund for the most recent year is explicitly identified as a projection. Actual economic data is provided only for years prior to the most recent year. This generates another type of uncertainty in figures for military spending: the calculated figures for military expenditure in dollar terms and as a share of GDP are provisional.

While the difference between budgeted and actual military spending is often minor, it is likely to be more pronounced for 2020 due to the effect of Covid-19. Likewise, the difference between projected (estimated) and final economic data will be greater than usual.

Table 3. The biggest relative increases and decreases in military expenditure, 2019–20

Spending figures are in US dollars, at current prices and exchange rates. Changes are in real terms, based on constant (2019) US dollars. Percentages below 10 are rounded to 1 decimal place; those over 10 are rounded to whole numbers. Countries with military expenditure in 2020 of less than $100 m. (or $50 m. in Africa) are excluded.

Rank	Country	Spending ($ m.), 2020	Increase (%), 2019–20	Country	Spending ($ m.), 2020	Decrease (%), 2019–20
1	Uganda	985	*46*	Lebanon	1 921	*–59*
2	Myanmar	(2 446)	*41*	Bulgaria	1 247	*–44*
3	Chad	323	*31*	Sudan	934	*–37*
4	Montenegro	102	*29*	Togo	116	*–34*
5	Nigeria	2 568	*29*	Mozambique	154	*–24*
6	Morocco	4 831	*29*	Burundi	67.5	*–23*
7	Mauritania	200	*23*	Ethiopia	461	*–15*
8	Mali	593	*22*	Angola	994	*–12*
9	Romania	5 727	*21*	Cameroon	393	*–11*
10	Hungary	2 410	*20*	Saudi Arabia	57 519	*–10*
11	Azerbaijan	2 238	*17*	Zambia	212	*–10*
12	El Salvador	372	*17*	Bahrain	1 405	*–9.8*
13	Afghanistan	280	*16*	Kazakhstan	1 733	*–9.2*
14	Rwanda	143	*15*	Niger	240	*–9.0*
15	Madagascar	87.4	*15*	Trinidad and Tobago	157	*–8.8*

( ) = uncertain estimate.

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2021.

increasing trend since 2011, with seven years of growth (i.e. 2011–15 and 2019–20) and three years of minor decrease (i.e. 2016–18), to give an overall increase of 42 per cent over the decade.

At $9.7 billion in 2020, Algeria's military expenditure was 3.4 per cent lower than in 2019, but it remained by far the largest spender in North Africa and Africa as a whole. The fall in oil prices starting in 2014 and the subsequent decline in Algeria's oil revenues had a substantial impact on its military spending by the end of 2016. Over the period 2017–20, Algeria's spending decreased in every year except 2019 and fell by 5.3 per cent overall.

The large fall in Algeria's GDP related to the Covid-19 pandemic contributed to an increase in its military burden to 6.7 per cent of GDP in 2020, which was the highest burden in Africa and the third highest in the world.

In 2020 Morocco's military spending was $4.8 billion, up by 29 per cent on 2019 and 54 per cent higher than in 2011. Several factors were behind this increase, including a large arms procurement programme that started in 2017, the ongoing conflict between the Moroccan Government and the Polisario Front in Western Sahara, and tensions with neighbouring Algeria.

Military spending in sub-Saharan Africa was $18.5 billion in 2020—3.4 per cent higher than in 2019, but 13 per cent lower than in 2011. The increase in military spending in 2020 was the first in the subregion since 2014.

At $3.2 billion, South Africa's military expenditure was the highest in sub-Saharan Africa in 2020. Nigeria, the second largest spender in the subregion, allocated $2.6 billion to its military in 2020, a 29 per cent increase compared with 2019. The fight against Boko Haram and other Islamist extremist groups has been a persistent challenge for Nigeria over the past decade.

Angola's military expenditure fell by 12 per cent in 2020, to $994 million. Over the period 2011–14, Angola's military spending rose by 53 per cent and

it became sub-Saharan Africa's largest spender. However, Angola's military spending has fallen by 73 per cent since 2014, and in 2020 it was the fourth largest military spender in sub-Saharan Africa.

As Uganda, sub-Saharan Africa's fifth largest spender, continued to fight an insurgency by the Allied Democratic Forces, it raised its military spending by 46 per cent in 2020, to $985 million (see table 3). This followed a 53 per cent spending increase in 2019.

The Americas

Military expenditure in the Americas was $853 billion in 2020. This was 3.9 per cent higher than in 2019 but 8.4 per cent lower than in 2011. Three countries from the region were among the world's top 15 military spenders in 2020: USA (rank 1), Canada (rank 13) and Brazil (rank 15).

North American countries (i.e. Canada and the USA) slightly increased their share of total regional military spending in 2020, reaching 94 per cent. South America's share of the regional total fell from 6.3 per cent in 2019 to 5.1 per cent in 2020, while that of Central America and the Caribbean remained almost unchanged, at around 1.0 per cent.

Military spending in South America fell by 2.1 per cent in 2020, to $43.5 billion. The fall was mainly due to a 3.1 per cent drop in spending by Brazil, South America's largest military spender. Despite this decrease, Brazil's military spending remained the third highest in the Americas, at $19.7 billion. The economic costs of the Covid-19 pandemic appear to have had an impact on Brazil's military spending in 2020: Brazil's actual military spending amounted to only 88 per cent of its initial military budget.

Chile's initial military budget for 2020 totalled $4.6 billion. This was a 2.8 per cent reduction on its military spending in 2019. In April 2020 the National Congress adjusted its initial budget to reallocate $936 million intended to finance the modernization of Chile's fleet of F-16 combat aircraft to cover costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Following a relatively high increase (of 9.4 per cent) in military expenditure in 2019, spending in Central America and the Caribbean was almost unchanged in 2020, with a minor 0.2 per cent decrease to $8.6 billion. Mexico's military spending was stable in 2020, at $6.1 billion. The fight against drug cartels remained an important driver of Mexico's military spending in 2020.

Asia and Oceania

Military expenditure in Asia and Oceania totalled $528 billion in 2020. Military spending in the region was 2.5 per cent higher in 2020 than in 2019 and 47 per cent higher than in 2011, continuing an uninterrupted upward trend since at least 1989. The rise was due primarily to increases in spending by China and India, which together accounted for 62 per cent of total military expenditure in the region in 2020.

While spending increased in four of the five subregions in Asia and Oceania in 2020, it fell by 8.4 per cent in Central Asia (see figure 3). Over the decade 2011–20, there were substantial increases in all five subregions, ranging from 35 per cent in Oceania to 53 per cent in East Asia.

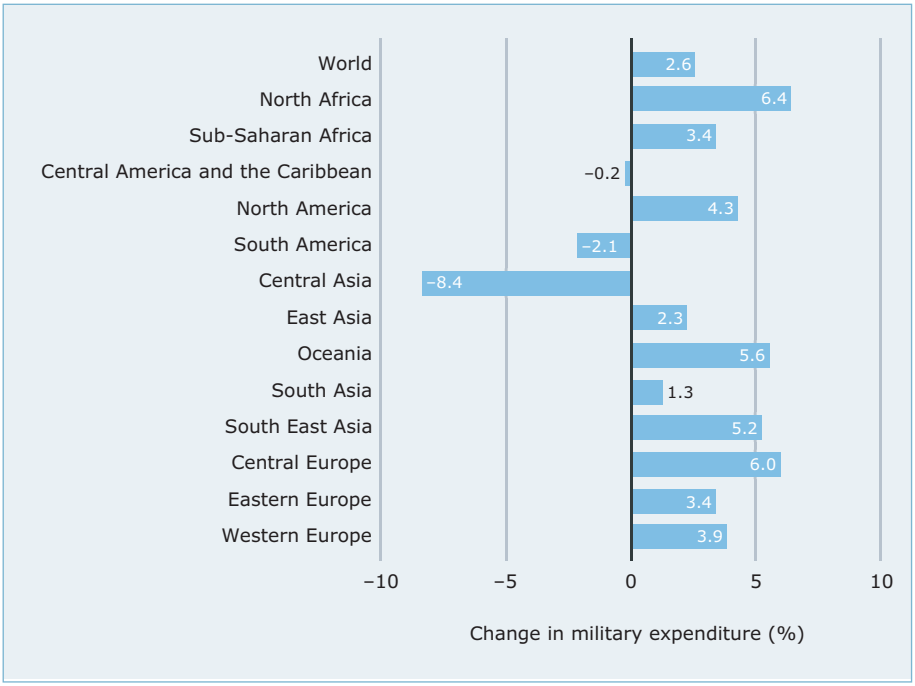


Figure 3. Changes in military expenditure, by subregion, 2019–20

Note: No estimate of change in military expenditure in the Middle East is given since data for 2015–20 is highly uncertain. However, a rough estimate for the Middle East is used to calculate the change in world spending.

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2021.

With a total of $49.1 billion, Japan was the second largest military spender in East Asia in 2020, behind China. Japan's military spending increased by 1.2 per cent on 2019 and by 2.4 per cent on 2011. At 1.0 per cent of GDP, Japan's military burden in 2020 reached the guideline limit that it implemented in 1976. Japan last reached this threshold in 2015.

South Korea's military spending was $45.7 billion in 2020, up by 4.9 per cent on 2019 and by 41 per cent on 2011. The South Korean Government revised its military budget downwards twice in 2020 in order to divert funds to address some of the adverse economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2020 spending by Australia accounted for 90 per cent of military expenditure in Oceania. At $27.5 billion, Australia's military spending was 5.9 per cent higher than in 2019 and 33 per cent higher than in 2011. In recent years Australia's defence strategy has revolved around perceived heightened military threats in its neighbourhood and countering the rise of China.

Military spending in South East Asia increased by 5.2 per cent to $45.5 billion in 2020. Over the decade 2011–20, military spending in the subregion rose by 36 per cent.

The three largest spenders in South East Asia in 2020—Singapore ($10.9 billion), Indonesia ($9.4 billion) and Thailand ($7.3 billion)—all increased their military spending in 2020. Possible factors driving military spending upward in some states in the subregion include China's continued assertiveness and the numerous territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

Europe

Total military spending in Europe in 2020 amounted to $378 billion. This was 4.0 per cent higher than in 2019 and 16 per cent higher than in 2011.

Military spending rose in all three subregions in 2020 and over the decade 2011–20. In Western Europe military spending in 2020 totalled $273 billion, up by 3.9 per cent on 2019 and by 8.5 per cent on 2011. Spending in Eastern Europe reached $71.7 billion in 2020—3.4 per cent higher than in 2019 and 31 per cent higher than in 2011. At $33.6 billion in 2020, military spending by countries in Central Europe increased by 6.0 per cent on 2019 and by 74 per cent on 2011.

With a total of $59.2 billion in 2020, the UK was the largest military spender in Western Europe and the fifth largest in the world. The UK's

military expenditure was 2.9 per cent higher than in 2019 but 4.2 per cent lower than in 2011. The increase in 2020 was the UK's second highest level of year-on-year growth in 2011–20, a decade that—until 2018—was characterized by military spending cuts.

In 2020 Germany increased its military spending by 5.2 per cent to $52.8 billion or 1.4 per cent of GDP. Its military expenditure was 28 per cent higher than in 2011, when its military burden was 1.2 per cent of GDP. According to the Ministry of Defence's approved budget covering 2021, Germany's military spending is set to continue to rise.

France's military spending increased by 2.9 per cent in 2020 to reach $52.7 billion or 2.1 per cent of GDP. Over the decade 2011–20, France's military expenditure rose by 9.8 per cent. In 2020 a large part of the increase related to spending on equipment, which was 16 per cent higher than in 2019.

Poland's military spending, which accounted for 39 per cent of the Central European total, was $13.0 billion in 2020. Poland's spending was 8.7 per cent higher than in 2019 and 60 per cent higher than in 2011. According to its 2020 National Security Strategy, Poland has committed to increase its military burden from the 2020 level of 2.2 per cent of GDP to 2.5 per cent by 2024.

Hungary's military expenditure grew for the sixth consecutive year, to $2.4 billion in 2020. Hungary's military spending has increased by 133 per cent since 2014 to cover the costs of the expansion of its military capabilities and the replacement of ageing Soviet-sourced equipment. The growth in spending in 2020 was partly a result of a financial stimulus package implemented in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Bulgaria reduced its military spending by 44 per cent in 2020 (see table 3). This decrease followed a sharp increase of 130 per cent in 2019, which can be attributed to the one-off full payment for eight new combat aircraft.

Azerbaijan's 17 per cent increase in military spending was the largest relative increase among countries in Eastern Europe in 2020. The rise in spending was largely driven by the conflict with Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. In contrast, Armenia's military spending fell by 2.6 per cent in 2020.

The Middle East

The combined military spending of the 11 Middle Eastern countries for which data is available was $143 billion in 2020.[1] While the military spending of all four other regions in the world rose in 2020, the spending of these Middle Eastern countries fell by 6.5 per cent. Of the 11 countries in the region included in the estimate, only 4 increased their military spending in 2020: Egypt (7.3 per cent), Israel (2.7 per cent), Jordan (2.5 per cent) and Oman (1.7 per cent). Notwithstanding the overall decreasing trend in military spending in the Middle East in 2020, the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was large enough to result in increases in military burden. Except for Lebanon, whose military burden shrank from 4.7 per cent

[1] Countries included in the estimate are Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

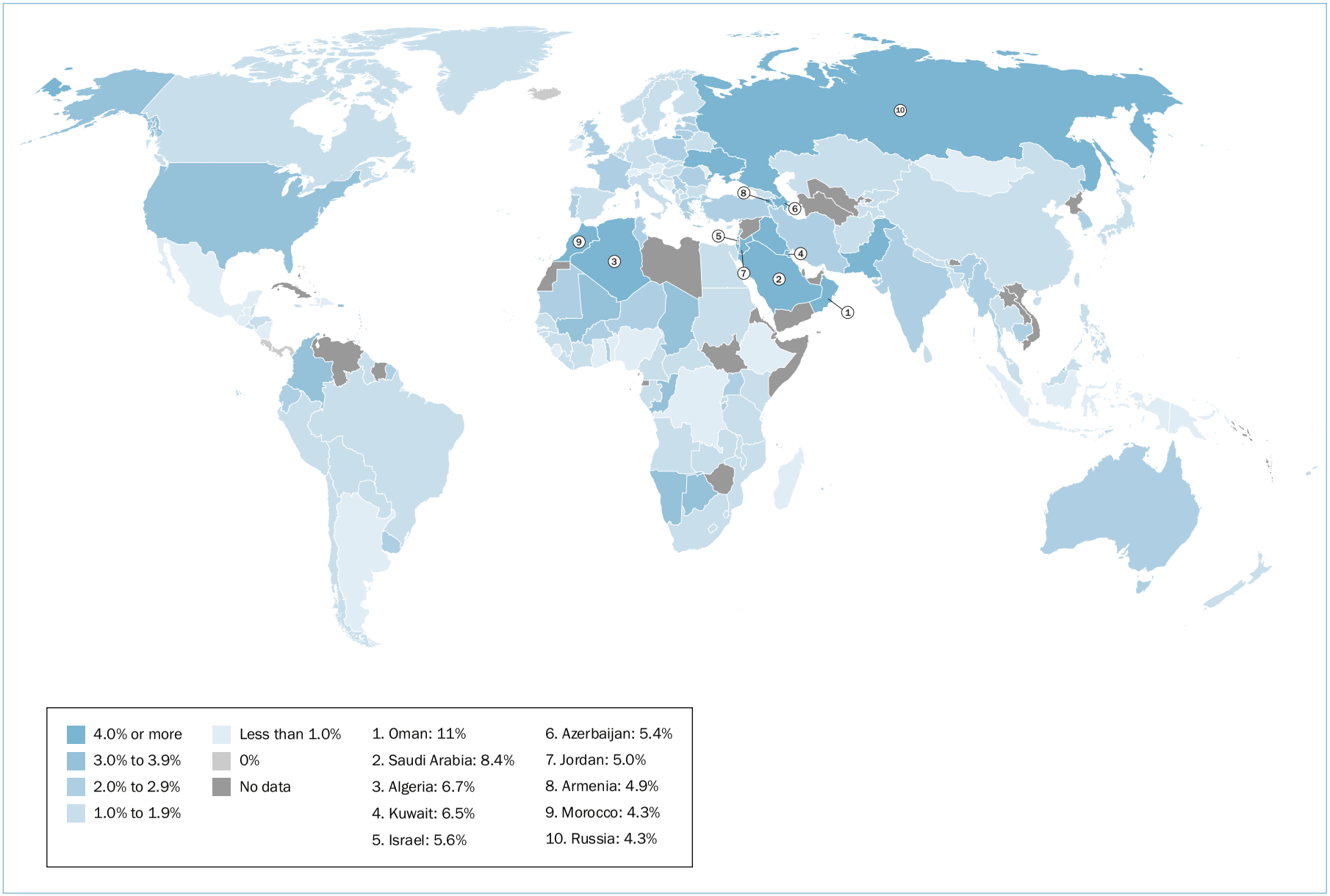


Figure 4. Military spending as a share of gross domestic product, by country, 2020

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

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2021.

in 2019 to 3.0 per cent in 2020, all Middle Eastern countries for which data is available either increased or maintained their military burdens in 2020.

Saudi Arabia's military expenditure was $57.5 billion in 2020, 10 per cent lower than in 2019. In the four years leading up to Saudi Arabia's military intervention in Yemen in 2015, its military spending grew by 63 per cent to reach an all-time high. Since the start of the intervention, however, Saudi Arabia's military spending has decreased by 37 per cent, which can largely be attributed to low oil prices over the period.

Israel's military spending totalled $21.7 billion in 2020—a 2.7 per cent increase over 2019. The 2020 increase followed the announcement of the Momentum Plan in 2019, an ambitious multi-year programme that aims to restructure Israel's military capabilities.

Turkey's military expenditure decreased by 5.0 per cent in 2020, to $17.7 billion. The fall was an exception in a decade marked by a continued upward trend in Turkey's military spending, with growth of 77 per cent between 2011 and 2020. Growth became steeper from 2015, coinciding with an increasingly assertive Turkish foreign policy.

Kuwait's military expenditure decreased in 2020 for the first time since the oil price collapse in 2014, falling by 5.9 per cent. Despite this spending decrease, Kuwait's military burden rose by 1 percentage point to 6.5 per cent of GDP. The fall in the price of oil because of declining demand as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic had a particularly negative impact on Kuwait's economy in 2020.

Iran's military spending fell by 3.0 per cent in 2020, to $15.8 billion. This continued a downward trend that started in 2018, when the USA reinstated economic sanctions over Iran's nuclear activities. Iran's military spending fell by 20 per cent between 2018 and 2020.

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 burden of the military on the country. The global military burden increased by 0.2 percentage points in 2020, which was the biggest annual increase since the global financial and economic crisis in 2009. The rise is mainly due to the fact that most countries in the world experienced severe economic downturns in 2020 related to the Covid-19 pandemic, while military expenditure continued to increase overall. For the same reasons, the average military burden increased in all five regions. The Americas had the lowest average military burden in 2020, at 1.5 per cent of GDP. For countries in Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Europe, the average was slightly higher, at 1.8 per cent of GDP. The highest average, 4.9 per cent, was for the Middle East, based on countries for which data is available.

Of the 150 countries for which SIPRI provides military burden data for 2020, 24 had a military burden of 3.0 per cent or more and 96 had a burden of 1.0–2.9 per cent of GDP (see figure 4). Thirty countries had a military burden of less than 1.0 per cent. The country with the lowest military burden in 2020 was Haiti (less than 0.01 per cent of GDP), which re-established its military in 2017. Costa Rica, Iceland and Panama do not have a military and therefore have no military burden.

Five of the 10 countries with the highest military burdens in the world are in the Middle East: Oman, which spent 11 per cent of its GDP on the military, Saudi Arabia (8.4 per cent), Kuwait (6.5 per cent), Israel (5.6 per cent) and Jordan (5.0 per cent). The other five are Algeria (6.7 per cent), Azerbaijan (5.4 per cent), Armenia (4.9 per cent), Morocco (4.3 per cent) and Russia (4.3 per cent).

The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, sources and methods

The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database provides military expenditure data by country for the years 1949–2020 in local current prices, constant US dollars, current US dollars, as a share of gross domestic product, per capita and as a share of general government expenditure. The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database was updated on 26 April 2021. This new data replaces all previous data published by SIPRI. The database and further details on the definitions, sources and methods used are available on the Military Expenditure Database web page of the SIPRI website.

In this Fact Sheet, all figures for spending in 2020 are given in 2020 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 (2019) US dollars.

Sources

SIPRI data reflects the official data reported by national governments. Such data is obtained from official publications such as budget documents, and in some cases from reports based on these. Of the 168 countries for which SIPRI attempted to estimate military expenditure in 2020, relevant spending data was found for 151 countries. SIPRI's database provides military burden data for 150 of these countries.

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).

Civil defence and current expenditure on previous military activities, such as veterans' benefits, demobilization, conversion, weapon destruction and military involvement in non-military activities (e.g. policing) are excluded.

The SIPRI military expenditure figures are presented on a calendar-year basis. The only exception is the United States, for which figures are presented on a financial-year basis. Calendar-year data is calculated on the assumption of an even rate of expenditure throughout the financial year.

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