

VI. About SIPRI military expenditure data

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In the past, SIPRI has published 10-year series of military expenditure in tables in the *SIPRI Yearbook*. From this year, we are no longer doing so as the full SIPRI Military Expenditure database, with data on 171 countries between 1988 and 2015, is freely available online, as a spread sheet and in printable PDF format, at <http://www.sipri.org/databases/milex/>. All the data presented in this chapter is taken from the data in this database. This section explains the purpose behind this data. More detailed information on the sources and methods can be found at http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex_database/copy_of_sources_methods.

The main purpose of the data on military expenditure is to provide an easily identifiable measure of the scale of resources absorbed by the military. Military expenditure is an ‘input’ measure, which is not directly related to the ‘output’ of military activities, such as military capability or military security. Long- and short-term changes in military spending may be signs of a change in military output, but interpretations of this type should be made with caution.

SIPRI data on military expenditure is presented in several forms: first, in local currency, which is the original, raw data from which all other data is calculated. This data is provided to contribute to transparency and to enable comparison with data reported in government sources and elsewhere. Second, in constant-price (currently 2014) US dollars, which allows for comparison over time for each country, and for the calculation of world, regional and other totals (see table 13.1 in section I). Third, in current-price US dollars, to allow international comparison across countries and regions for each year. The current dollar figures also facilitate comparison with other economic indicators, which are often expressed in current dollar terms. Fourth, military expenditure as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) is an indicator of the proportion of a country’s resources used for military activities, that is, of the economic burden of military expenditure—the ‘military burden’. Conversion to current and constant US dollars has been made using market exchange rates.

The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database is revised and updated each year, as new and better data becomes available. Figures presented in the current version of the database may therefore differ from figures presented for the same country and year in previous versions of the database or in previous *SIPRI Yearbooks*. This is true in particular for the most recent years as figures for budget allocations are replaced by figures for actual expenditure. Revisions in constant dollar series can also be caused by revisions in the economic statistics used for these calculations.

Data collection

New data for the current edition of the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database was collected by Sam Perlo-Freeman, Aude Fleurant, Noel Kelly, Pieter Wezeman and Siemon Wezeman. Additional contributions of military expenditure data, estimates and advice are gratefully acknowledged from Wael Abdul-Shafi (European Union Institute for Security Studies), Julian Cooper (University of Birmingham, Centre for Russian and East European Studies), Dimitar Dimitrov (University of National and World Economy, Sofia), Iñigo Guevara y Moyano (Colectivo de Análisis de la Seguridad con Democracia, Querétaro), Shir Hever (Frie Universität, Berlin), Thomas Scheetz (Lincoln University College, Buenos Aires) and Nerhan Yentürk (Istanbul Bilgi Universty).