

Research Briefing

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# Military assistance to Ukraine since the Russian invasion



## Summary

- 1 Military assistance to Ukraine pre-invasion
- 2 UK military assistance to Ukraine
- 3 US military assistance to Ukraine
- 4 NATO military assistance to Ukraine
- 5 EU military assistance to Ukraine
- 6 Other bilateral assistance to Ukraine
- 7 Is military assistance making a difference?

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# Contents

<b>Summary</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1 Military assistance to Ukraine pre-invasion</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2 UK military assistance to Ukraine</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 UK military assistance pre-invasion	9
2.2 Provision of defensive weaponry starts in 2021	9
2.3 Government statements since Russian military operations in Ukraine started	10
Government will supply more weapons, but will not send forces to Ukraine	10
Details of what weapons the UK will supply “operationally sensitive”	11
Further package of military support promised	11
Some details of military support announced	12
UK Government does not support a no-fly zone	12
<b>3 US military assistance to Ukraine</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1 Overview	14
3.2 Biden administration	14
Response to Russian military build up	15
3.3 Aid since Russian military action	15
New funds for military assistance announced	16
White House provides details of weaponry provided	17
<b>4 NATO military assistance to Ukraine</b>	<b>18</b>
NATO and the provision of lethal arms	19
<b>5 EU military assistance to Ukraine</b>	<b>20</b>
5.1 Historical support	20
5.2 Support since Russian military operations began	20
Request for Soviet-era fighter jets	21

	Poland and Slovakia offer to send jets in return for US fighters	22
<b>6</b>	<b>Other bilateral assistance to Ukraine</b>	<b>25</b>
6.1	European countries	25
	Austria	25
	Belgium	25
	Bulgaria	25
	Croatia	26
	Czech Republic	26
	Cyprus	26
	Denmark	26
	Estonia	27
	Finland	27
	France	28
	Germany	28
	Greece	29
	Hungary	29
	Ireland	30
	Italy	30
	Latvia	30
	Lithuania	31
	Luxembourg	31
	Netherlands	31
	Norway	32
	Poland	32
	Portugal	33
	Romania	33
	Slovakia	33
	Slovenia	34
	Spain	34
	Sweden	35
6.2	Non-European countries	35

	Australia	35
	Canada	36
	Japan	36
	Turkey	37
<b>7</b>	<b>Is military assistance making a difference?</b>	<b>39</b>

## Summary

Defence and security links between Ukraine and NATO members and other Western countries, started soon after Ukraine's independence in 1991. They intensified further when Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, but primarily took the form of training and the provision of non-lethal military equipment.

Since Russia's military operations against Ukraine began on 24 February 2022, a large number of NATO members started supplying or approved supplying lethal weapons to Ukraine, including Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

For some countries such as Germany this was a significant reversal of their previous defence policies, which had ruled out providing offensive weapons.

The European Union announced it would provide a €450 million lethal arms support package through its [European Peace Facility](#) (EPF), the first time the bloc had in its history approved the supply of lethal weapons to a third country. It has since announced another €500 million increase to the EPF Ukraine military assistance package.

The US announced an additional \$350 million of military assistance to Ukraine once Russian military operations began, and then later in March a further \$800 million, taking the total security assistance the US had approved for Ukraine to \$2 billion over the past year.

The UK Government has said that [there is not, and will not, be any prospect of UK or NATO forces providing active military support](#) in Ukraine itself, and no NATO alliance member has proposed putting troops on the ground. It has not provided all the details of what military equipment it is currently supplying to Ukraine for "operational security reasons", but announced on 9 March that it had supplied 3,615 NLAWs (Next-Generation Light Anti-Tank Weapon Systems).

The UK has also ruled out creating a no-fly zone over Ukraine, and this is the position of the other NATO allies including the US (the parliaments of the three [Baltic nations](#) have all passed resolutions in support of no-fly zones, but their Governments have yet to officially endorse the policy).

Plans for NATO allies Poland and Slovakia who possess Soviet-era jets such as the MiG-29 to supply them to the Ukrainian air force who already fly such models, have not yet come to fruition. The difficulties include "back-filling" the donor countries with new jets so they have sufficient numbers to maintain their air-defences.

Weapons supplied to Ukraine, particularly troop-carried, shoulder-fired anti-tank missiles, such as the US-made Javelin, and UK-supplied NLAWs, appear to have made a significant difference in halting Russia's military advance into the country. However, Russia has started to focus more of its efforts on attacking cities with long-range rockets and artillery, which Western-supplied military aid can do little to counter. Ukraine is still calling for more and "bigger ticket" weapons to be supplied.

# 1 Military assistance to Ukraine pre-invasion

The UK and other Western allies have worked on security cooperation initiatives with Ukraine since its independence in 1991, focused on defence reform, defence planning and capacity building.

In response to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the ongoing crisis in Eastern Ukraine, and at the request of the Ukrainian Government, Western allies significantly stepped up their support. Reiterating their commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, military assistance to the Ukrainian armed forces has been a key part of their overall approach.

This assistance, however, was largely in the form of training the Ukrainian military both through NATO-led programmes and bilateral programmes, and though the provision of non-lethal equipment.

In 2018 the US became the first Ukrainian ally to provide major defensive lethal weaponry, when the Trump administration approved the provision of Javelin anti-tank missiles to Ukraine.<sup>1</sup> In 2019, Ukraine purchased a number of Bayraktar drones from Turkey.<sup>2</sup>

The build-up of Russian military forces in Crimea and on the eastern Ukrainian border over the course of 2021 and early 2022 put further pressure on Western nations to increase support to the country.

For the first time, several countries, including the UK and the Baltic nations started supplying defensive lethal weaponry to Ukraine.

Russia said Western military assistance to Ukraine was a provocation and accused the West of supporting Ukraine in militarising eastern Ukraine and dismantling the 2014 and 2015 Minsk Agreements, which had been the basis for a political solution to the conflict there.

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<sup>1</sup> Radio Free Europe, [U.S. Confirms Delivery Of Javelin Antitank Missiles To Ukraine](#), 3 April 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Washington Post, [Why Ukraine's Turkish-made drone became a flash point in tensions with Russia](#), 15 January 2022.



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## 2 UK military assistance to Ukraine

### 2.1 UK military assistance pre-invasion

UK military assistance to Ukraine is longstanding.<sup>3</sup> In October 2014, and in response to Russia’s annexation of Crimea and the destabilisation of the east of the country, the Government announced that bilateral military assistance would be expanded at the request of the Ukrainian Government. That support included the provision of a package of non-lethal military equipment.<sup>4</sup>

In 2015 the UK launched Operation Orbital, a non-lethal training and capacity building operation, it provides guidance and training to the Ukrainian armed forces through several advisory and short-term training teams. This has been the main vehicle for providing training and assistance to Ukrainian forces.

The UK has also in the last few years launched initiatives to enhance Ukraine’s naval capacity and provide training for its naval forces.

For more detail on historic UK military assistance to Ukraine see Library briefing: [Military assistance to Ukraine 2014-21](#).

### 2.2 Provision of defensive weaponry starts in 2021

In early December 2021, and in light of new Russian military activity on Ukraine’s borders,<sup>5</sup> the Government said that the UK is “considering an extension of purely defensive support to Ukraine to help it defend itself”.<sup>6</sup>

In January 2022 the Ministry of Defence confirmed that, in addition to the existing support being provided, the UK will provide a new security assistance package “to increase Ukraine’s defensive capabilities”, including the provision of light, anti-armour weapons. A small contingent of British military personnel will also deploy to provide initial training for a short period of time, within the framework of Operation Orbital.

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<sup>3</sup> In September 2014 the MOD gave an overview of the military assistance that has been provided to Ukraine in the previous six years ([PQ 209093](#), Ukraine, 13 October 2014)

<sup>4</sup> In July 2014 the [Council of the European Union](#) lifted the restrictive measures on export licenses to Ukraine that it had [previously imposed](#) in the February of that year in response to political violence in the country.

<sup>5</sup> This is examined in greater detail in House of Commons Library, [Ukraine: Russia’s “red line”](#).

<sup>6</sup> [HC Deb 7 December 2021 \[Ukraine\], c188](#)

Announcing the decision, the Defence Secretary said:

Ukraine has every right to defend its borders, and this new package of aid further enhances its ability to do so. Let me be clear, this support is for short-range and clearly defensive weapon capabilities. They are not strategic weapons and pose no threat to Russia. They are to use in self-defence.<sup>7</sup>

Although intended for defensive purposes, this decision represents the first time the UK has supplied lethal weaponry to Ukraine. On 30 January 2022 the Government confirmed that 2,000 anti-armour missiles had been supplied.<sup>8</sup>

On 10 February the MOD confirmed that additional defensive equipment, including body armour, helmets and combat boots would also be provided.<sup>9</sup>

In response to concerns of an imminent Russian invasion the UK announced in mid-February that all UK military training personnel would withdraw from Ukraine.<sup>10</sup>

## 2.3

### Government statements since Russian military operations in Ukraine started

On 24 February 2022, the Prime Minister addressed the House of Commons on the situation in Ukraine. In his statement Mr Johnson repeated a phrase he had used in his [national address earlier in the day](#): “Now we have a clear mission: diplomatically, politically, economically and **eventually militarily**, this hideous and barbaric venture of Vladimir Putin must end in failure” [Our emphasis].<sup>11</sup>

Asked by Hilary Benn MP, “what did he mean by militarily? Was he referring to providing further defensive weapons to enable Ukraine to defend itself?”,<sup>12</sup> Mr Johnson replied “Obviously I do not want to go into detail, because it is a sensitive and difficult business, but, yes, we have done so and continue to do so. I believe that I have the support of the House in intending to continue to do so”.<sup>13</sup>

### Government will supply more weapons, but will not send forces to Ukraine

On 25 February in response to an Urgent Question on Ukraine in the House of Commons, the Minister for the Armed Forces, James Heappey, made clear

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<sup>7</sup> HC Deb 17 January 2022, [Ukraine](#), c62

<sup>8</sup> Downing Street, [Press release](#), 30 January 2022

<sup>9</sup> HCWS608, [Ukraine](#), 10 February 2022

<sup>10</sup> BBC News, Russia-Ukraine crisis: UK won't be able to fly people out – minister, 12 February 2022.

<sup>11</sup> HC Deb 24 February 2022, [Ukraine](#), c564

<sup>12</sup> HC Deb 24 February 2022, [Ukraine](#), c571

<sup>13</sup> HC Deb 24 February 2022, [Ukraine](#), c571

that while the Government would look to provide further military support to Ukraine, he couldn't elaborate on the details because they are "operationally sensitive", and that there was no prospect of "active military support" in Ukraine by British or NATO forces:

[W]e will explore all that we can do to support the Ukrainians in the next few days. All hon. Members in this House must be clear that British and NATO troops should not—must not—play an active role in Ukraine. We must all be clear what the risks of miscalculation could be and how existential the situation could quickly become if people do miscalculate and things escalate unnecessarily.

The Government do not feel that they can share with the House the detail of the support that the UK will provide to the Ukrainians at this sensitive point in operations. We apologise for that. We will do our best to give the House as much as we can, but hon. Members will appreciate that the detail is operationally sensitive.<sup>14</sup>

## Details of what weapons the UK will supply "operationally sensitive"

Pressed for further details of what additional military equipment and support the UK might be able to provide, the Minister said the Secretary of State has "instructed military officers in Defence to look across the full UK inventory for everything that we have right now that might be usable in the circumstances and to look at whether that could be sent forward and absorbed by the Ukrainians".

He warned, however of some of the difficulties involved, including that most systems require some degree of training, and all the countries that have intellectual property or that operate the system have to give their permission for it to be donated. He emphasised though that "we are leaving no stone unturned, and [...] we want to see as much British kit in the hands of the Ukrainians as we can manage".<sup>15</sup>

## Further package of military support promised

On 2 March, James Heappey told the House of Commons that "in the next hours and days, we will provide a further package of military support to Ukraine". This package will include "lethal aid in the form of defensive weapons and non-lethal aid such as body armour, medical supplies and other key equipment as requested by the Ukrainian Government". But the Minister said once again "it is not possible to share with the House more of the detail at this sensitive point in operations, but we will do our best to share it with hon. Members after the event as much as we can".<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> HC Deb 25 February 2022, [Ukraine](#), c623

<sup>15</sup> HC Deb 25 February 2022, [Ukraine](#), c623

<sup>16</sup> HC Deb 2 March 2022, [Support for Ukraine and Countering Threats from Russia](#), C1107

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As of 9 March 2022, the UK had delivered 3,615 next generation light anti-tank weapons (NLAWs) to Ukraine

## Some details of military support announced

On 9 March, the Defence Secretary Ben Wallace revealed some details of the military assistance the UK had provided so far. He said the UK had continued to supply next generation light anti-tank weapons (NLAWs), going beyond the 2,000 first announced on 17 January. He told the House, “As of today, we have delivered 3,615 NLAWs and continue to deliver more”, and in addition “We will shortly be starting the delivery of a small consignment of anti-tank javelin missiles”.<sup>17</sup>

Mr Wallace added that, in response to Ukrainian requests, the Government have taken the decision “to explore the donation of Starstreak high-velocity, man-portable anti-aircraft missiles”. He said that “we believe that this system will remain within the definition of defensive weapons, but will allow the Ukrainian forces to better defend their skies”.<sup>18</sup>

He also announced the UK would be increasing supplies of rations, medical equipment, and other non-lethal military aid.

The Defence Secretary argued that the Government was exercising caution when deciding what military assistance to provide Ukraine saying, “everything we do is bound by the decision to supply defensive systems and is calibrated not to escalate to a strategic level”.<sup>19</sup>

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Government to explore providing Starstreak anti-aircraft missiles

Answering a Parliamentary Question on 14 March on what defensive military equipment had been supplied to the Ukrainian armed forces, James Heapey detailed it included “some 3,000 sets of body armour, 2,000 helmets, 4,000 cold weather boots and more than 75,500 pieces of other equipment including ear defenders and sleeping mats”.<sup>20</sup>

## UK Government does not support a no-fly zone

On 24 February, Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP asked the Prime Minister in the House of Commons, about the request from the Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK for a no-fly zone over the country. Urging Mr Johnson to say, “he rules nothing out”,<sup>21</sup> the Prime Minister replied:

I understand the attractions of the no-fly zone. I remember the no-fly zone that was created in 1991, as I recall, in northern Iraq. However, the situation here is very different. We would face the risk of having to shoot down Russian planes, and that is something that I think the House would want to contemplate with caution.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> HC Deb 9 March 2022, [Ukraine Update](#), c325.

<sup>18</sup> HC Deb 9 March 2022, [Ukraine Update](#), c326.

<sup>19</sup> HC Deb 9 March 2022, [Ukraine Update](#), c325.

<sup>20</sup> PQ 133133 [[on Ukraine: Military Aid](#)], 14 March 2022

<sup>21</sup> HC Deb 24 February 2022, [Ukraine](#), c577

<sup>22</sup> HC Deb 24 February 2022, [Ukraine](#), c571

On 25 February James Heappey was also asked in the House about helping implement a no-fly zone over Ukraine. Mr Heappey replied similarly to the Prime Minister saying:

As Members will appreciate, a no-fly zone is somewhat difficult to implement in a hostile airspace against a peer adversary. We need to have our eyes wide open to the reality that in such an event NATO jets would, not just possibly but most certainly probably, come into a combat situation with Russian jets, and the risk of miscalculation, escalation and the triggering of article 5 could not be understated in those circumstances.<sup>23</sup>

The Minister added he “understand[s] exactly why the Ukrainian ambassador is asking for this” but reiterated the risks of escalation.

Our Library briefing ‘[No-fly zones and Ukraine](#)’, gives further details of calls for a no-fly zone in Ukraine, the response of the UK and its allies, their legal basis and examples of when have they been used before,

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<sup>23</sup> HC Deb 25 February 2022, [Ukraine](#). c621

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## 3 US military assistance to Ukraine

### 3.1 Overview

Ukraine has been a leading recipient of US foreign and military aid since the early 1990s. In the first decade after independence, Ukraine received almost \$2.6 billion in aid. In the years leading up to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, Ukraine was receiving an estimated \$105 million per annum, including foreign military financing.

From the onset of conflict in 2014, the US Congressional Research Service estimates that the US provided Ukraine with more than \$2.5 billion in security assistance across the board.<sup>24</sup>

For more on US military assistance to Ukraine before recent events see Library briefing [Military assistance to Ukraine 2014-21](#).

### 3.2 Biden administration

On 1 March 2021, the US Department of Defense announced a further \$125 million military assistance package for Ukraine, the first of its kind under the Biden administration. The package of equipment includes two additional Mark VI patrol boats to enhance Ukraine's capacity to patrol and defend its territorial waters,<sup>25</sup> additional counter artillery radars and tactical equipment, satellite imagery and analysis capability and equipment to support military medical treatment and combat evacuation procedures. In announcing the package, the DoD stated that "This action reaffirms the U.S. commitment to providing defensive lethal weapons to enable Ukraine to more effectively defend itself against Russian aggression".<sup>26</sup>

A further \$150 million for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative was announced in June 2021, followed by an additional \$60 million package for lethal and non-lethal equipment, including Javelin anti-armour missiles, in September 2021.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> US Congressional Research Service, R45008, [Ukraine: Background, Conflict with Russia and US Policy](#), October 2021 (accessed on 15 December 2021)

<sup>25</sup> The DoD has committed a total of 8 patrol boats.

<sup>26</sup> US Department of Defense press release, 1 March 2021

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Department of Defense press release, August 31, 2021

In August 2021 the US and Ukraine also signed a [Strategic Defense Framework](#) to provide a foundation for strengthening defence cooperation. Among its priorities are defence industry reform, strengthening cooperation with respect to security in the Black Sea, cyber defence and intelligence sharing, and countering Russian aggression.<sup>28</sup>

## Response to Russian military build up

In December 2021 the US indicated that, in response to Russian aggression, it could provide additional defensive capabilities to Ukraine, above and beyond what it is already providing.<sup>29</sup> A further \$200 million in military assistance was subsequently authorised by the US administration.<sup>30</sup>

On 26 January 2022 the US State Department confirmed additional Javelin missiles, other anti-armour systems, ammunition and non-lethal equipment have been delivered to Ukraine, with further deliveries planned. Among further assistance will be five US Mi-17 helicopters. The US has also granted authorisation to US allies to provide Ukraine with US-origin military equipment from their own inventories.<sup>31</sup> On 11 February, US National Security Adviser, Jake Sullivan, said:

We have made good on the commitment to get those deliveries into the hands of the Ukrainian armed forces. Those are defensive weapons intended to defend Ukraine against aggression. They are not meant for offensive purposes against any country.

The US has, however, ruled out the deployment of US ground forces to Ukraine.<sup>32</sup>

On 10 November 2021 the US and Ukraine adopted a [Charter on Strategic Partnership](#) which underlines the US' commitment to Kiev and the intention to enhance defence and security cooperation between the two countries in order to counter "Russia's aggression".

## 3.3

## Aid since Russian military action

In remarks delivered on 24 February 2022, President Biden referenced the substantial military aid the US had already provided to Ukraine in the past

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<sup>28</sup> [White House press release](#), 1 September 2021

<sup>29</sup> White House, [Press briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki and National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan](#), 7 December 2021

<sup>30</sup> US Department of Defense, Pentagon Press Secretary John F. Kirby holds a press briefing, 27 January 2022

<sup>31</sup> US Department of State, [Press briefing](#), 27 January 2022

<sup>32</sup> White House, [Remarks by President Biden before Marine One Departure](#), 8 December 2021 (accessed on 10 December 2021)

year “\$650 million in defensive assistance”, and made clear that US forces would not fight in Ukraine:

[L]et me say it again: Our forces are not and will not be engaged in the conflict with Russia in Ukraine. Our forces are not going to Europe to fight in Ukraine but to defend our NATO Allies and reassure those Allies in the east.<sup>33</sup>

The day before, US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin was reported to have pledged to continue sending American Javelin anti-tank weapons and other aid to Ukraine.<sup>34</sup>

## New funds for military assistance announced

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26 February: US announces further \$350 million of military assistance.

On 26 February it was announced that President Biden had authorised “an additional \$350 million of military assistance from Department of Defense inventories, including anti-armour, small arms and various munitions, body armour, and related equipment”.<sup>35</sup> At the time, this took the total security assistance the US had approved for Ukraine to \$1 billion over the past year.<sup>36</sup>

The Associated Press also reported that the US was sending anti-aircraft Stinger missiles to Ukraine,<sup>37</sup> however this has been questioned. On 28 February, the Washington Post quoted unnamed defence officials as saying that the “the new package includes more Javelins, although Stingers are likely to wait until a further tranche”.<sup>38</sup> A CNN report on 2 March said that 200 Stinger missiles had been delivered to Ukraine for the first time, attributing the information to “a US official and a congressional source briefed on the matter”.<sup>39</sup>

On 12 March, US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, announced another tranche of funding, of “up to \$200 million for additional military assistance for Ukraine’s defence”.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> The White House, [Remarks by President Biden on Russia’s Unprovoked and Unjustified Attack on Ukraine](#), 24 February 2022.

<sup>34</sup> Defense News, [Pentagon studying fallback supply lines to Ukraine ahead of expanded Russian invasion](#), 23 February 2022.

<sup>35</sup> US Department of Defense, [Department of Defense Statement on Additional Military Assistance for Ukraine](#), 26 February 2022.

<sup>36</sup> US Department of Defense, [Department of Defense Statement on Additional Military Assistance for Ukraine](#), 26 February 2022..

<sup>37</sup> USA Today, [Ukraine agrees to meet with Russia Monday: Belarus could join Russian invasion: recaps](#), 27 February 2022.

<sup>38</sup> Washington Post, [The U.S. has been rushing to arm Ukraine, but for years it stalled on providing weapons](#), 28 February 2022.

<sup>39</sup> CNN, [US delivered hundreds of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to Ukraine this week, sources say](#), 2 March 2022.

<sup>40</sup> US Department of State, [Press release: \\$200 Million in New Security Assistance for Ukraine](#), 12 March 2022.



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US announces a further \$1 billion in security assistance in March 2022. Taking the total for the last year to \$2 billion.

On 16 March, President Biden announced an additional \$800 million dollars in security assistance.

### White House provides details of weaponry provided

The White House provided further details of what the \$800 million package would provide:

- 800 Stinger anti-aircraft systems;
- 2,000 Javelin, 1,000 light anti-armour weapons, and 6,000 AT-4 anti-armour systems;
- 100 Tactical Unmanned Aerial Systems;
- 100 grenade launchers, 5,000 rifles, 1,000 pistols, 400 machine guns, and 400 shotguns;
- Over 20 million rounds of small arms ammunition and grenade launcher and mortar rounds;
- 25,000 sets of body armour; and
- 25,000 helmets.<sup>41</sup>

It also provided details of what previous US assistance to Ukraine included, though it's not clear over what time frame:

- Over 600 Stinger anti-aircraft systems;
- Approximately 2,600 Javelin anti-armour systems;
- Five Mi-17 helicopters;
- Three patrol boats;
- Four counter-artillery and counter-unmanned aerial system tracking radars;
- Four counter-mortar radar systems;
- 200 grenade launchers and ammunition;
- 200 shotguns and 200 machine guns;
- Nearly 40 million rounds of small arms ammunition and over 1 million grenade, mortar, and artillery rounds;
- 70 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) and other vehicles;
- Secure communications, electronic warfare detection systems, body armour, helmets, and other tactical gear;
- Military medical equipment to support treatment and combat evacuation;
- Explosive ordnance disposal and demining equipment; and
- Satellite imagery and analysis capability.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> The White House, [Fact Sheet on U.S. Security Assistance for Ukraine](#), 16 March 2022.

<sup>42</sup> The White House, [Fact Sheet on U.S. Security Assistance for Ukraine](#), 16 March 2022.

## 4 NATO military assistance to Ukraine

Ukraine joined NATO's [North Atlantic Cooperation Council](#) as a partner country in 1991 and the [Partnership for Peace](#) programme in 1994. The NATO-Ukraine Commission was also established in 1997 and is the forum through which consultation between NATO allies and Ukraine takes place on security issues of common concern.

The crisis in Ukraine has been discussed in the forum frequently since 2014 with commitments on all sides to “intensify cooperation and promote defence reforms through capacity building and capability development programmes”.<sup>43</sup>

Since 2016, NATO's practical support for Ukraine has been set out in its Comprehensive Assistance Package. Specifically, that support is focused on 16 capacity building programmes and several trust funds, a number of which were established after 2014. Those latter [trust funds](#) include:

- command, control, communications and computers (C4)
- logistics and transformation
- Cyber defence
- Medical rehabilitation
- Explosive ordnance disposal and countering-IEDs.

Other significant examples of NATO-Ukraine coordination over the last several years include:

- NATO has increased its presence in the Black Sea and stepped up maritime cooperation with Ukraine;
- NATO allies and Ukraine regularly participated in a wide range of military exercises with Ukrainian armed forces personnel through the Military Committee with Ukraine Work Plan, for example Exercise Rapid Trident, has been held annually since 2011;
- In **June 2020** Ukraine was offered [Enhanced Opportunity Partner](#) status with NATO, providing Ukraine with preferential access to NATO's exercises, training and exchange of information and situational awareness, in order to increase interoperability;
- In **January 2022**, the NATO Secretary General confirmed that Ukraine and NATO would conclude an agreement on enhanced cyber cooperation, following a cyberattack on Ukrainian government institutions.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> [NATO Ukraine Commission](#)

<sup>44</sup> NATO, [Statement by the NATO Secretary General on cyber attacks against Ukraine](#), 14 January 2022

For more on NATO's support to Ukraine before the 2022 invasion see Library briefing: [Military assistance to Ukraine 2014-21](#).

## NATO and the provision of lethal arms

NATO's training and capacity building programmes in Ukraine were non-lethal in nature. NATO Members differed in their opinions on the provision of lethal weaponry to Ukraine after Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and in the years before the Russian military operations started.

Until the end of 2021 only the US and Turkey had, bilaterally, been providing Ukraine with lethal arms. The situation changed when the significant build-up of Russian military forces around Ukraine started in 2022.

All weapons provided to Ukraine by NATO members have been provided bilaterally, eg directly from countries, the alliance does not have its own collective stores of weapons.<sup>45</sup> See [Section 6](#) for what bilateral military aid is being provided.

Since Russian military operations started in Ukraine, NATO has helped to coordinate Ukraine's requests for assistance and says it "is supporting Allies in the delivery of humanitarian and non-lethal aid".<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> NATO does provide essential military infrastructure including air and naval basing facilities, satellite communications, fuel pipelines, and command and control systems.

<sup>46</sup> NATO, [NATO's response to Russia's attack on Ukraine](#), last updated 2 March 2022.

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## 5 EU military assistance to Ukraine

### 5.1 Historical support

Historically, the EU had only provided limited [support for civilian security sector reform](#). Military reform has largely been the focus of NATO and bilateral cooperation with individual allies.

However, in December 2021 the EU announced a package of measures to help strengthen the capacity of the Ukrainian armed forces. Established under the EU's new [European Peace Facility](#),<sup>47</sup> the package is worth €31 million over three years and will finance military medical units, including field hospitals, engineering, mobility and logistics units and support on cyber.<sup>48</sup>

In January 2022 EU foreign ministers also began discussing the establishment of an EU military training assistance mission to Ukraine, which will focus on military education reform.<sup>49</sup>

### 5.2 Support since Russian military operations began

On 27 February, EU High-Representative for foreign affairs, Josep Borrell, announced that the EU would for the first time directly finance military assistance to Ukraine, including lethal arms.

The [European Peace Facility](#) (EPF) will be used to fund two emergency assistance measures: “to finance the supply of lethal material to the Ukrainian army, as well as urgently needed fuel, protective equipment and emergency medical supplies”.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> The [European Peace Facility \(EPF\)](#) was established in March 2021 as an “off budget” instrument that allows the EU to finance operational actions under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that have military or defence implications. It replaces the previous Athena Mechanism through which the common costs of EU military operations were financed.

<sup>48</sup> Council on the European Union, [Press release](#), 2 December 2021

<sup>49</sup> EU External Action Service, [Foreign Affairs Council: Press remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell](#), 24 January 2022

<sup>50</sup> EU External Action Service, [Further measures to respond to the Russian invasion of Ukraine: Press statement by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell](#), 27 February 2022.

Mr Borell said that a “taboo has fallen”, and that this will be the first time in history that the EU will be providing lethal equipment to a third country.

The lethal arms support package will be worth €450, and €50 million will fund non-lethal supplies such as fuel and protective equipment.<sup>51</sup> Mr Borrell also announced that Poland had agreed to serve as a logistics hub for the transfer of this assistance to Ukraine.

Irish Foreign and Defence Minister Simon Coveney said that under the EPF mechanism, countries uncomfortable with supplying lethal aid such as Ireland, would have the option of putting their contributions to the EPF towards alternative forms of assistance, such as medical supplies and protective armour. Austria and Malta are said to be following a similar approach.<sup>52</sup>

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**EU doubles military assistance to Ukraine to €1 billion in total through the European Peace Facility.**

On 11 March Mr Borell announced the EU would provide another €500 in military assistance to Ukraine by doubling the funds through the European Peace Facility.<sup>53</sup>

### **Request for Soviet-era fighter jets**

Mr Borrell said during questions to the press that Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba had requested the EU provide fighter jets for Ukraine, and the EU was looking to provide such assistance:

We are going to supply arms and even fighter jets [...] we are providing the most important arms to go to war.

Minister Kuleba has been asking us that they need the type of fighter jets that the Ukrainian army is able to operate. We know what kind of planes and some Member States have these kinds of planes.<sup>54</sup>

It was later clarified that such assistance would come from EU Member States directly and not from EU funding arrangements.<sup>55</sup>

The Ukrainian military flies Soviet-built MiG and Sukhoi models. Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia are among EU Member States who are reported to fly such models, or have them in longer-term storage.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> European External Action Service, [Informal videoconference of Foreign Affairs Ministers: Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the press conference](#), 27 February 2022.

<sup>52</sup> Euractiv, [Irish PM: Non-lethal aid to Ukraine not against military neutrality](#), 1 March 2022.

<sup>53</sup> EU External Action Service, [Informal EU Leaders' meeting in Versailles: Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell upon arrival](#), 11 March 2022.

<sup>54</sup> European External Action Service, [Informal videoconference of Foreign Affairs Ministers: Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the press conference](#), 27 February 2022.

<sup>55</sup> Wall Street Journal, [EU Member Countries in Talks to Supply Ukraine With Jet Fighters](#), 28 February 2022.

<sup>56</sup> Flight Global, [The changing balance of NATO's European fighter fleet](#), 26 November 2020.

However, on 1 March 2022, it was reported that Bulgaria, Poland and Slovakia had explicitly ruled out supplying their jets, and the other nations had not come forward with offers meaning it appeared very unlikely to happen.<sup>57</sup>

## Poland and Slovakia offer to send jets in return for US fighters

On 8 March the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs put out a statement saying it was “ready to deploy – immediately and free of charge – all their MIG-29 jets to the Ramstein Air Base and place them at the disposal of the Government of the United States of America”.<sup>58</sup> Ramstein is a United States Air Force base in southwestern Germany.

The statement said that “at the same time, Poland requests the United States to provide us with used aircraft with corresponding operational capabilities. Poland is ready to immediately establish the conditions of purchase of the planes”.<sup>59</sup>

It also urged other NATO allies who own MIG-29s to do the same.

### US says Polish proposal not tenable

On the same day the US dismissed this proposal however, with the Pentagon Press Secretary saying in a statement “the decision about whether to transfer Polish-owned planes to Ukraine is ultimately one for the Polish government”.<sup>60</sup>

The statement also pointed to the complexities of Poland’s plan, particularly the proposal of putting the jets “at the disposal of” the US Government, adding that “departing from a U.S./NATO base in Germany to fly into airspace that is contested with Russia over Ukraine raises serious concerns for the entire NATO alliance”, and “It is simply not clear to us that there is a substantive rationale for it”.

While the Pentagon committed to continue to consult with Poland and other NATO allies about the issue they reiterated “we do not believe Poland's proposal is a tenable one”.<sup>61</sup>

The UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace, asked in the House of Commons about the possibility of Poland supplying jets to Ukraine, said it was as with

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<sup>57</sup> Politico, [EU countries won't send Ukraine fighter jets after all](#), 1 March 2022.

<sup>58</sup> Poland Ministry of Foreign Affairs, [Statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland in connection with the statement by the US Secretary of State on providing airplanes to Ukraine](#), 8 March 2022.

<sup>59</sup> Poland Ministry of Foreign Affairs, [Statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland in connection with the statement by the US Secretary of State on providing airplanes to Ukraine](#), 8 March 2022.

<sup>60</sup> US Department of Defense, [Statement by Pentagon Press Secretary John F. Kirby on Security Assistance to Ukraine](#), 8 March 2022.

<sup>61</sup> US Department of Defense, [Statement by Pentagon Press Secretary John F. Kirby on Security Assistance to Ukraine](#), 8 March 2022.

all decisions on whether to provide lethal aid, “for each individual country to make the unique choice that it has to make”. He added though that “if the Polish Government feel that the security threat is so acute that it requires them to do that, I would fully understand their decision and stand by them”.<sup>62</sup>

### Slovakian proposal

Slovakia has said it is prepared to send its MiG-29s to Ukraine but it still exploring how to ensure it has sufficient jets to protect its airspace.

On 17 March US Secretary of Defence, Lloyd Austin, travelled to Slovakia and met with his Slovakian counterpart, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad'. In a press briefing between the two, Mr Nad' said the provision of jets had been a topic of conversation: “Provided that we decide to stop operating the MiG-29s, we also talked about the options open to us to fill the gap until the arrival of new F-16s from the United States”.<sup>63</sup>

Slovakia is set to receive 14 new F-16 fighters, but the delivery of those jets has been delayed a year, from 2023 to 2024.<sup>64</sup>

Slovakia is planning to phase out the MiG-29s in October 2023 regardless of whether new jets are available according to Radovan Javorcik, Slovakia's Ambassador to the U.S.

Mr Javorcik, noted the difficulties of trying to find replacement fighters to fill the gap. He said that even if other NATO allies were to send their retiring F-16s right away—one of several proposals that NATO has discussed to reinforce its Eastern flank—Slovakia is still not yet ready to do more than basic maintenance for them. The F-16 “ecosystem” still has to be developed in Slovakia, he said.

“The new F-16s will not come earlier than ... late '23, early '24,” he noted, “So we need to talk to everybody, to all allies,” about how to cover Slovakia's air defence needs during the interim.<sup>65</sup>

### Effectiveness of supplying MiG-29s questioned

Justin Bronk, Airpower and technology Research Fellow at RUSI, has written that supplying replacement MiG-29 fighters for the Ukrainian Air Force “might marginally improve its capabilities, but has greater political and therefore escalatory significance for both sides”.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> HC Deb 9 March 2022, [Ukraine update](#), C340

<sup>63</sup> Slovakia Ministry of Defence, [U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III visits Slovakia as a signal of friendship and alliance](#), 17 March 2022.

<sup>64</sup> Air Force Magazine, [Slovakia Ready to Provide S-300s and MiG-29s to Ukraine, Pending New Replacements](#), 17 March 2022.

<sup>65</sup> Air Force Magazine, [Slovakia Ready to Provide S-300s and MiG-29s to Ukraine, Pending New Replacements](#), 17 March 2022.

<sup>66</sup> RUSI, Justin Bronk, [A Ukraine No-Fly Zone Would be Ineffective, Dangerous and a Gift to Putin](#), 10 March 2022.

Comparing the jets to the mobile surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems, that Bronk says the Ukrainians have used to great effectiveness to target Russian fast jets and helicopters, “the airbases that MiG-29s rely on make them more vulnerable to Russian cruise and ballistic missile attacks”.

He also cautions that the required adaptation of any MiG-29’s supplied by Western allies, such as removing NATO-standard crypto, identification systems, radios and other equipment which cannot be sent to Ukraine, while training Ukrainian pilots to be combat-effective in an unfamiliar cockpit layout, “would also take weeks at least”.

In terms of their effectiveness, Bronk argues “With a very short range at low altitudes (where both sides are having to operate), MiG-29s would also not be able to provide persistent defensive cover in contested areas like mobile SAMs can”.<sup>67</sup>

He instead argues NATO allies should explore options to supply Ukraine with the legacy Soviet- or Russian-made SAM systems which remain in the inventories of several eastern European NATO member states.

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<sup>67</sup> RUSI, Justin Bronk, [A Ukraine No-Fly Zone Would be Ineffective, Dangerous and a Gift to Putin](#), 10 March 2022.



## 6 Other bilateral assistance to Ukraine

### 6.1 European countries

#### Austria

In line with its long-standing neutrality policy, Austria will not send lethal aid to the Ukrainian military. Austria's Chancellor Karl Nehammer, said on 28 February that his Government would send protective equipment for **civilian** forces, and 10,000 helmets to protect civilians also.

Austria is not a member of NATO. In 1955 it passed a [constitutional law on the neutrality of Austria](#), that bars Austria from joining any military alliances and from allowing any foreign military bases on its territory.<sup>68</sup>

#### Belgium

On 26 February, Belgian Prime Minister Alexander de Croo, announced that Belgium would supply 2,000 machine guns and 3,800 tonnes of fuel to Ukraine.<sup>69</sup> On 27 February he announced an additional arms package of 3,000 automatic weapons and 200 anti-tank weapons.<sup>70</sup>

Belgium is a NATO member and hosts NATO Headquarters.

#### Bulgaria

Bulgarian Prime Minister Kiril Petkov, clarified after comments by EU High-Representative for foreign affairs, Josep Borrell, on the possibility of fighter jets being sent to Ukraine, that Bulgaria wouldn't take part in such an initiative. Mr Petkov said "no commitments have been made for Bulgarian fighters. We currently have few flying planes and they cannot be delivered to another country."<sup>71</sup>

There had been speculation that countries such as Bulgaria that fly the same models of Soviet-era jets used by Ukraine, could supply them directly (see [Section 5.2](#)).

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<sup>68</sup> New Austrian Information, Dr. Helmut Tichy, [Austria's Permanent Neutrality](#), 2015-16.

<sup>69</sup> Twitter, [Alexander De Croo](#): @alexanderdecroo, 26 February 2022 (in French)

<sup>70</sup> Twitter, [Alexander De Croo](#): @alexanderdecroo, 27 February 2022

<sup>71</sup> Euractiv, [Bulgaria will not send fighters, troops to Ukraine](#), 1 March 2022.

He also ruled out sending bilateral aid to Ukraine directly, saying that in terms of military-logistical support, “if something is done, it will be at the level of the EU and NATO and will not be sent from Bulgaria to Ukraine”.<sup>72</sup>

## Croatia

Croatia agreed to send infantry weapons and protective equipment sufficient to equip four brigades. The value of the weapons is €16.5 million. On 1 March, Croatian Defence Minister Mario Banožić detailed that “we are talking about rifles and machine guns with the calibres requested by the Ukrainian side”.<sup>73</sup>

Croatia is a NATO member.

## Czech Republic

The Czech Republic announced it is delivering 30,000 pistols, 7,000 assault rifles, 3,000 machine guns, several dozen sniper guns and about a million cartridges to Ukraine.<sup>74</sup>

The Czech Government had already agreed to donate some 4,000 pieces of artillery shells worth the equivalent of \$1.7 million to Ukraine.<sup>75</sup>

The Czech Republic is a member of NATO.

## Cyprus

Cyprus will not send military aid to Ukraine, though it will be participating in the European Peace Facility.<sup>76</sup> It’s not clear if Cyprus like Ireland, will request for its contribution to the Facility to only be put towards non-lethal aid.

Cyprus is not a NATO member and is the only EU Member to not be part of NATO’s Partnership for Peace programme, due to the outstanding reunification problem.<sup>77</sup>

## Denmark

At the end of January 2022, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, said she was prepared to send to military aid to Ukraine, and that the Danish military were already providing advice to its Ukrainian counterparts in areas like cybersecurity.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Euractiv, [Bulgaria will not send fighters, troops to Ukraine](#), 1 March 2022

<sup>73</sup> Euractiv, [Croatia to send weapons to Ukraine, provide health care to refugees](#), 1 March 2022.

<sup>74</sup> France 24, [Too little too late? West finally coughs up arms for Ukraine](#), 26 February 2022.

<sup>75</sup> Radio Free Europe, [Czech Republic, Netherlands To Ship More Military Aid To Ukraine](#), 26 February 2022.

<sup>76</sup> KNews, [Cyprus to provide humanitarian aid to Ukraine, not military equipment](#), 28 February 2022.

<sup>77</sup> Atlantic Council, [NATO membership for Cyprus. Yes, Cyprus](#), 1 April 2019.

<sup>78</sup> The Defense Post, [Denmark Prepared to Send Military Equipment to Ukraine](#), 31 January 2022.

After Russian military operations began, Denmark said it was ready “to supply parts of the approximately 300 Stinger missiles” that the Danish Defence Force were going to dispose of, as well as 2,700 shoulder-launched anti-tank missiles.<sup>79</sup>

Denmark will also provide body armour, first aid bags, and a mobile hospital to Ukraine.<sup>80</sup>

Denmark is a NATO member.

## Estonia

In July 2020, Estonia sent a small shipment of 2400 Soviet-era Makarov semi-automatic pistols to Ukraine.<sup>81</sup> As the Russian military build-up around Ukraine began at the end of 2021, Estonia moved to provide more weapons with more firepower.

In January 2022, the Estonian Government said it planned to send 122-millimetre Howitzers and Javelin missiles to the Ukrainian army, however these shipments required the permission from the countries of origin, which are the US, Finland and Germany. The US approved Estonia’s request to send Javelins to Ukraine that same month.<sup>82</sup> Germany refused permission to Estonia to send Howitzers,<sup>83</sup> and Finland said it would consider the request.<sup>84</sup>

Once Russian military operations started at the end of February both Germany and Finland approved the licences.<sup>85</sup> Estonia then also announced additional military support, including additional javelin missiles and anti-aircraft munitions as well as 25,000 packages of dry food, medical equipment, personal equipment, and ammunition.<sup>86</sup>

Estonia is a NATO member.

## Finland

On 27 February 2022 Finland announced it was providing “military protective equipment” to Ukraine. This will include 2,000 bulletproof vests, 2,000 composite helmets, 100 stretchers as well as equipment for two emergency medical care stations.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Euractiv, [Denmark to send weapons, allow nationals to fight in Ukraine](#), 1 March 2022.

<sup>80</sup> CPH Post online, [Danish government will send anti-tank missiles to Ukraine](#), 28 February 2022.

<sup>81</sup> ERR News, [Estonia sends 2,400 Makarov pistols to Ukraine](#), 7 July 2020.

<sup>82</sup> Reuters, [U.S. clears Baltic states to send U.S.-made weapons to Ukraine](#), 20 January 2022.

<sup>83</sup> Deutsche Welle, [“Why Germany refuses weapons deliveries to Ukraine”](#), 19 January 2022

<sup>84</sup> Euractiv, [Estonia plans to supply Ukraine with heavy weapons](#), 3 January 2022.

<sup>85</sup> See Finnish Government, [Press release: Finland sends additional aid to Ukraine](#), 27 February 2022; and Politico, [Germany to send Ukraine weapons in historic shift on military aid](#), 26 February 2022.

<sup>86</sup> Interfax Ukraine, [Estonia to provide Ukraine with additional batch of Javelins, ammunition – media](#), 25 February 2022.

<sup>87</sup> Finnish Government, [Press release: Finland sends additional aid to Ukraine](#), 27 February 2022.

The Government also granted Estonia a licence to re-export to Ukraine artillery guns and their ammunition, which Estonia had previously purchased from Finland.<sup>88</sup>

Finland is not a member of NATO and it has a long-standing policy of military non-alignment. However, Finland does participate in NATO-led initiatives, and along with Sweden, Finland joined NATO's [Partnership for Peace Programme](#) in 1994.<sup>89</sup>

## France

Before Russia's military operations started in Ukraine France had only provided humanitarian aid and budgetary support.

On 25 February, France's President Macron told the French Parliament that the country will now provide defensive equipment to Ukraine, but did not detail what the equipment would be.<sup>90</sup> Ukraine's embassy in Paris said it had in particular requested anti-aircraft hardware.<sup>91</sup>

Macron wrote that France will provide Ukraine with an "additional budgetary assistance of 300 million euros" and "will provide the defensive material they need".<sup>92</sup>

France is a NATO member.

## Germany

### Before Russian military action

Germany stated in January 2022 that it would not meet a request from the Ukrainian government for the transfer of lethal weaponry amid concerns that it would provoke Russia and hamper the diplomatic process.<sup>93</sup>

Germany also refused to grant permits to other EU countries such as Estonia to export German-origin weapons like artillery,<sup>94</sup> as well as vetoing Ukraine's purchase of anti-drone rifles and anti-sniper systems via the NATO Support and Procurement Agency.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Finnish Government, [Press release: Finland sends additional aid to Ukraine](#), 27 February 2022.

<sup>89</sup> See NATO, [Relations with Finland](#), last updated 2 September 2021, accessed 28 September 2022; and Wilson Center, [Sisters But Not Twins: Prospects of Finland and Sweden's NATO Accession](#), 2 February 2022.

<sup>90</sup> CNN, [France will provide defensive equipment to Ukraine](#), 25 February 2022.

<sup>91</sup> France 24, [Too little too late? West finally coughs up arms for Ukraine](#), 26 February 2022.

<sup>92</sup> CNN, [France will provide defensive equipment to Ukraine](#), 25 February 2022.

<sup>93</sup> Deutsche Welle, ["Why Germany refuses weapons deliveries to Ukraine"](#), 19 January 2022.

<sup>94</sup> Reuters, 21 January, Germany blocks Estonia from exporting German-origin weapons to Ukraine - WSJ

<sup>95</sup> Financial Times, [Ukraine blames Germany for 'blocking' Nato weapons supply](#), 12 December 2021.

A spokesman for the Social Democratic Party highlighted France and Germany's position as mediators within the Normandy Format, which seeks to reach a political settlement to the conflict in eastern Ukraine, and suggested that it was not "appropriate for a mediator nation to send weapons to Ukraine, to one conflict party, because we are trying to promote a diplomatic solution".<sup>96</sup>

Germany instead proposed providing a field hospital and other non-lethal equipment including military helmets.<sup>97</sup>

### After Russian military action

On 26 February, in an abrupt change of policy, the German Government announced it would now supply lethal weapons to Ukraine, including 1,000 anti-tank weapons and 500 Stinger anti-aircraft defence systems.<sup>98</sup> In addition Germany will send 14 armoured vehicles and up to 10,000 tons of fuel.<sup>99</sup>

The Government has also authorised the Netherlands to send Ukraine 400 rocket-propelled grenade launchers and Estonia to ship nine howitzers, which had originally been sourced from Germany.<sup>100</sup>

Germany is a NATO member.

### Greece

On 27 February Greece announced it was sending military aid including ammunition, "Kalashnikov-type assault rifles" and missile launchers to Ukraine. No details were given on amounts. The Government said the aid had already been dispatched when the announcement was made.<sup>101</sup>

Greece is a NATO member.

### Hungary

Hungary has said that it will not send weapons to Ukraine. Hungary, which borders Ukraine, has also said it will not allow lethal weapons to transit its territory "as such deliveries might become targets of hostile military action", Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said on 28 February, stressing that Hungary should not get involved in the war between Ukraine and Russia.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> BBC News, ["Why Germany isn't sending weapons to Ukraine"](#), 29 January 2022.

<sup>97</sup> CNBC, ["It's a joke": Germany's offer of 5,000 helmets to Ukraine is met with disdain amid Russia invasion fears](#), 27 January 2022.

<sup>98</sup> Politico, [Germany to send Ukraine weapons in historic shift on military aid](#), 26 February 2022.

<sup>99</sup> AP News, [In a major shift, Germany will send weapons to Ukraine](#), 26 February 2022.

<sup>100</sup> Politico, [Germany to send Ukraine weapons in historic shift on military aid](#), 26 February 2022.

<sup>101</sup> Ekathimerini, [Greece sending military, civilian aid to Ukraine](#), 27 February 2022.

<sup>102</sup> Reuters, [Hungary will not allow lethal weapons for Ukraine to transit its territory – FM](#), 28 February 2022.

Hungary is a member of NATO.

## Ireland

In line with its traditional policy of military neutrality, Ireland's €9 million contributions to the EU's European Peace Facility (EPF) will go towards providing non-lethal materials such as medical supplies, fuel, helmets and vests.<sup>103</sup>

Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin, asked about whether anti-tank missiles held by Ireland's Defence Forces could be sent to Ukraine, said he believed "what we're doing is sufficient", and that it wasn't an issue now the EPF was activated, as that was providing lethal weapons.<sup>104</sup>

Ireland is not a member of NATO, but has deployed personnel in support of the NATO-led peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and contributed to the NATO-led peacekeeping [KFOR operation in Kosovo](#) since 1999.

## Italy

On 28 February the Italian Cabinet agreed to send a package of lethal weapons to Ukraine including, Stinger surface-to-air missiles, mortars and Milan, or Panzerfaust, anti-tank weapons. Also included were Browning heavy machine guns, MG-type light machine guns and counter-IED systems. The number and value of the weapons has not been reported.<sup>105</sup>

The support package will require the authorisation of the Italian Parliament.

Italy is a NATO member.

## Latvia

Latvia began providing lethal weapons in January 2022, requesting permission from the US to provide Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to Ukraine, originally sourced from the States.<sup>106</sup> On 23 February the Latvian Ministry of Defence confirmed it had delivered the Stinger systems to Ukraine, it has also provided "individual equipment and dry food supplies".<sup>107</sup>

Latvia is a NATO member.

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<sup>103</sup> Euractiv, [Irish PM: Non-lethal aid to Ukraine not against military neutrality](#), 1 March 2022.

<sup>104</sup> The Journal.ie, [Taoiseach says Ireland's non-lethal military support for Ukraine is 'sufficient' as EU members are sending weapons](#), 28 February 2022.

<sup>105</sup> Defense News, [Italy joins growing list of weapon donors to help Ukraine's defense](#), 28 February 2022.

<sup>106</sup> Reuters, [U.S. clears Baltic states to send U.S.-made weapons to Ukraine](#), 20 January 2022.

<sup>107</sup> Latvian Ministry of Defence, [Latvia delivers "Stinger" anti-aircraft missile system to Ukraine](#), 23 February 2022.

## Lithuania

Lithuania began providing lethal weapons to Ukraine in January 2022, gaining the approval of the US to send US-sourced weapons, believed to be Stinger anti-aircraft missiles.<sup>108</sup>

On 13 February the Ukrainian Defence Ministry confirmed it had received a shipment of ammunition and Stinger missiles from Lithuania.<sup>109</sup>

On 24 February, the Lithuanian Defence Ministry, confirmed it was continuing to send lethal military assistance to Ukraine, and would “shortly send” a consignment of body armour vests, helmets, Kalashnikov rifles, and ammunition.<sup>110</sup>

Lithuania is a NATO member.

## Luxembourg

On 28 February, Luxembourg’s Minister of Defence, François Bausch, announced his Government will supply 100 NLAWs to Ukraine. In addition, they will provide Ukraine with Jeep Wrangler 4x4 vehicles, as well as 15 military tents.<sup>111</sup>

Luxembourg is a NATO member.

## Netherlands

The week before Russian military operations began the Netherlands agreed to deliver weapons and military equipment to Ukraine, including 100 sniper rifles with 30,000 rounds of ammunition as well as radar devices and landmine detectors.

On 26 February, the Dutch Government said they would now send 200 stinger anti-aircraft missiles,<sup>112</sup> as well as 50 Panzerfaust-3 anti-tank weapons and 400 rockets.<sup>113</sup>

The Netherlands is a NATO member.

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<sup>108</sup> Reuters, [U.S. clears Baltic states to send U.S.-made weapons to Ukraine](#), 20 January 2022

<sup>109</sup> Reuters, [Ukraine receives anti-aircraft missiles from Lithuania](#), 13 February 2022.

<sup>110</sup> MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENCE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA, [Lithuania renders military assistance to Ukraine](#), 24 February 2022.

<sup>111</sup> Luxembourg Government, [Press release: François Bausch announces military assistance and support measures for Ukraine](#), 28 February 2022.

<sup>112</sup> Radio Free Europe, [Czech Republic, Netherlands To Ship More Military Aid To Ukraine](#), 26 February 2022.

<sup>113</sup> Reuters, [Netherlands to supply anti-tank weapons to Ukraine - DefenCe Ministry](#), 26 February 2022.

## Norway

Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre said on 26 February that that he would consider whether Norway should send military equipment to Ukraine. Mr Støre said he would potentially look at defensive equipment.<sup>114</sup>

Norway has a longstanding principle of not supplying weapons and ammunition to conflict zones, originating in a Parliamentary decision from 1959.<sup>115</sup> So a decision to supply weapons would be a departure from its previous stance.<sup>116</sup>

On 28 February, Mr Støre announced Norway would now send both defensive and offensive weapons to Ukraine. While acknowledging Norway's "restrictive policy with regard to exporting defence-related products", he added "but Ukraine is now in a desperate and extraordinary situation".<sup>117</sup>

Offensive weapons will include "up to 2 000 M72 anti-tank weapons".

The Norwegian Armed Forces sent off the first batch of defensive military equipment to Ukraine on 28 February, this included: 1,500 bulletproof vests, 5,000 helmets, 15,000 field rations, 1,000 gas masks with filters, 2,000 sleeping bags, 10,000 sleeping pads, and clothing.<sup>118</sup> Norway is a member of NATO.

## Poland

On 31 January 2022, the Polish National Security Bureau confirmed that Poland would now supply Ukraine with "defensive ammunition" including anti-aircraft ammunition.<sup>119</sup>

On 1 February, the Polish Prime Minister' Mateusz Morawiecki detailed that the military aid would include "tens of thousands of rounds and artillery shells, anti-aircraft missile sets, as well as light mortars and reconnaissance drones, and other defensive weapons".<sup>120</sup> On 4 February, Mr Morawiecki said he

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<sup>114</sup> Norway Today, [Ukraine's ambassador to Norway expects quick military equipment decision from PM Støre](#), 27 February 2022.

<sup>115</sup> Norwegian Church Aid & Amnesty & Amnesty International Norway, [Bullets Without Borders: Improving control and oversight over Norwegian arms production, exports and investments](#) (pdf 2,38 MB), 2006, See Box 2.1.

<sup>116</sup> According to the [report in the footnote above](#), there has been some flexibility shown previously, for example arms were exported to the US and UK during and after the 2003 invasion of Iraq. In this case it could be argued that the exports were not in contravention of the 1959 decision because the exports were initially destined for British and American territory, not Iraq directly.

<sup>117</sup> Norwegian Government, [Press release: Norway to provide weapons to Ukraine](#), 28 February 2022, accessed 21 March 2022.

<sup>118</sup> Norwegian armed forces (Forsvaret), [Norway sends military equipment and weapons to Ukraine](#), 1 March 2022, accessed 21 March 2022.

<sup>119</sup> Euractiv, [Poland to deliver defensive weapons to Ukraine](#), 1 February 2022.

<sup>120</sup> Polish Government: The Chancellery of the Prime Minister, [All of Europe and entire Western world must unite for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, says Prime Minister Morawiecki during visit to Kyiv](#), 1 February 2022.



expected “the first military transport will leave for Ukraine as early as next week”.<sup>121</sup>

Since Russian military operations began in Ukraine Poland has pledged further military support, but there are no details yet as to the size or type of equipment.

Poland has also offered to be a logistical hub to transfer military equipment from other allies and help channel them into the western part of Ukraine not yet occupied by Russian forces.<sup>122</sup>

Poland is a member of NATO.

## Portugal

Portugal’s Defence Minister João Gomes Cravinho, revealed that Portugal’s contribution to the EU European Peace Facility, will be around “€8-10 million”.<sup>123</sup> In addition, Portugal will also “send military equipment to Ukraine at the request of the Ukrainian authorities”, but has provided no details of what this might entail.<sup>124</sup>

Portugal is a NATO member.

## Romania

On 27 February, Romania announced it will send provisions and equipment worth 3 million euros to Ukraine and has offered to care for the wounded in military and civilian hospitals.

The aid sent will include fuel, ammunition, bullet-proof vests, helmets, military equipment, food and water.<sup>125</sup>

Romania is a NATO member.

## Slovakia

On 26 February the Slovakian Government approved military aid worth 11 million euros, including 120mm artillery ammunition and fuel.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Polish Government: The Chancellery of the Prime Minister, [Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki: A safe Ukraine is also the Polish and European raison d'état](#), 4 February 2022.

<sup>122</sup> Euractiv, [Poland 'key' in Western weapons supplies to Ukraine](#), 1 March 2022.

<sup>123</sup> Euractiv, [Portugal's to contribute €8-10 million to EU's arms package to Ukraine](#), 1 March 2022.

<sup>124</sup> Euractiv, [Portugal's to contribute €8-10 million to EU's arms package to Ukraine](#), 1 March 2022.

<sup>125</sup> Reuters, [Romania to send fuel, ammunition to Ukraine](#), 27 February 2022.

<sup>126</sup> Reuters, Czech, [Slovak governments increase military aid to Ukraine](#), 27 February 2022,

On 27 February, Slovakian Prime Minister Eduard Heger, announced a further package of military support including 486 air-defence missiles & anti-tank rockets, and 100 air defence launchers.<sup>127</sup>

It has been reported that Slovakia is prepared to send its Soviet-era S-300 anti-aircraft missile systems to Ukraine to help bolster its air defences.<sup>128</sup> Slovakia has made clear however, it is not possible to give away the missile defence systems that are currently protecting Slovakian airspace “without receiving adequate replacements”.<sup>129</sup>

On 20 March, Patriot air defence systems started to be deployed in Slovakia, however, this deployment was part of NATO’s efforts to bolster its Eastern flank and will be part of a new NATO battlegroup in Slovakia which neighbours Ukraine. Slovakian Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad made clear that the Patriot system will be a complement and not a replacement of its S-300 systems.<sup>130</sup>

For discussion of Slovakia’s proposal to transfer its MiG-29 fighter jets to Poland, see [section 5.2](#).

Slovakia is a member of NATO.

## Slovenia

Slovenia has sent rifles, ammunition and helmets to Ukraine, the Slovenian Defence Minister announced on 28 February, saying the equipment had already been dispatched. The exact quantities are unknown. The donated rifles are Kalashnikovs that the Slovenian Armed Forces had used before receiving newer equipment and which have been set aside as a strategic reserve.<sup>131</sup>

Slovenia is a NATO member.

## Spain

On 28 February, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said that Spain would be prepared to send defensive military equipment to Ukraine, but ruled out sending offensive weapons, in part due to opposition from his coalition partner the left-wing Unidas Podemos party. However, after criticism from opposition parties, Mr Sánchez has now reportedly changed course, saying on 2 March that Spain would now send offensive weapons.<sup>132</sup> There are no details, as of yet, as to what support Spain will provide.

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<sup>127</sup> Twitter, [Eduard Heger](#): @eduardheger, 27 February 2022.

<sup>128</sup> CNN, [Slovakia preliminarily agrees to send key air defense system to Ukraine](#), 16 March 2022.

<sup>129</sup> Slovakia Ministry of Defence, [U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III visits Slovakia as a signal of friendship and alliance](#), 17 March 2022.

<sup>130</sup> Reuters, [Slovakia starts deploying Patriot air defence system](#), 20 March 2022.

<sup>131</sup> Euractiv, [Slovenia sends military aid, including weapons, to Ukraine](#), 1 March 2022.

<sup>132</sup> Euractiv, [Spanish coalition split over decision to deliver weapons to Ukraine](#), 3 March 2022.

## Sweden

Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson announced on 27 February that “Sweden is now proposing direct support for Ukraine’s armed forces. It includes 135,000 field rations, 5,000 helmets, 5,000 body shields and 5,000 anti-tank weapons”.<sup>133</sup> In addition, Sweden will also provide 500 million Swedish Krona, (approximately €47 million) of financial support to Ukraine’s Armed Forces.<sup>134</sup>

Sweden is not a member of NATO and has a longstanding policy of military non-alignment. However, it has participated in NATO-led exercises, co-ordinates closely with the alliance including joining its [Partnership for Peace Programme in 1994](#), and has contributed to peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia and to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.<sup>135</sup>

## 6.2

## Non-European countries

### Australia

In 2021 Australia reportedly helped Ukraine’s military to “develop cyber security skills”, and Ukraine’s Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba was said to have asked his Australian counterpart, Foreign Affairs Minister Marise Payne, for further such technical assistance in January 2022.<sup>136</sup> Ms Payne ruled out sending direct military support to Ukraine.<sup>137</sup>

On 21 February, Australian Defence Minister Peter Dutton ruled out committing troops, but suggested that Australia could provide non-lethal military assistance.<sup>138</sup> On 25 February the country’s Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, confirmed that military assistance would be forthcoming. The details have yet to be announced, but the aid is expected to be sent through NATO allies in the form of finance, military equipment and medical supplies.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Reuters, [Sweden to send military aid to Ukraine - PM Andersson](#), 27 February 2022.

<sup>134</sup> Twitter, [Ann Linde @AnnLinde](#) (Swedish Foreign Minister), 27 February 2022.

<sup>135</sup> See NATO, [Relations with Sweden](#), last updated 2 September 2021, accessed 28 February 2022, and Wilson Center, [Sisters But Not Twins: Prospects of Finland and Sweden’s NATO Accession](#), 2 February 2022.

<sup>136</sup> ABC News, [Ukraine asks Australia for more ‘technical assistance’ to combat increasing Russian cyber attacks](#), 20 January 2022.

<sup>137</sup> 7 News, [Australia rules out Ukraine military aid](#), 21 January 2022.

<sup>138</sup> Sky News AU, [Australia to consider sending military equipment to Ukraine but Peter Dutton rules out troop deployment](#), 21 January 2022.

<sup>139</sup> Sydney Morning Herald, [Australia to send military equipment, medical supplies to Ukraine](#), 25 February 2022.

## Canada

Canada has been providing non-lethal military assistance to Ukraine on a bilateral basis for several years.

Since 2015 Canada has had a training and capacity building mission in Ukraine (Operation Unifier). At the end of January 2022, the Canadian government announced that the operation would be extended until March 2025.<sup>140</sup>

On 14 February 2022, Canada announced it would now provide lethal weaponry, saying it would donate “\$7 million of lethal weapons and assorted support items to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. This equipment includes machine guns, pistols, carbines, 1.5 million rounds of ammunition, sniper rifles, and various related equipment”.<sup>141</sup>

On 27 February, the Government announced it would send at least C\$ 25 million in additional non-lethal military aid to Ukraine, the deliveries will include helmets, body armour, gas masks and night vision gear.<sup>142</sup>

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly said she was coordinating with her Polish counterpart to deliver shipments through the NATO member, and that the C\$ 7 million of aid it announced earlier in the month had already been delivered.

Canada is a member of NATO.

## Japan

On 8 March, it was announced that Japan had sent non-lethal military aid to Ukraine, including bulletproof vests and helmets. Other non-lethal items, including tents, winter clothing, emergency food items, hygiene products, cameras and power generators, will follow soon.

The Government said there were no plans to send lethal aid, but this step was still momentous for Japan, which has been tentatively [pushing the bounds of its pacifist constitution](#) over the last several years.

Former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo [introduced looser restrictions on exporting military equipment abroad in 2014](#),<sup>143</sup> but there were questions as to whether the transfer of military equipment to Ukraine met even these more relaxed rules, as they are supposed to bar providing defence supplies to a country "party to a conflict".<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Government of Canada, [Canada extends and expands military and other support for the security of Ukraine](#), 26 January 2022.

<sup>141</sup> Government of Canada, [Canada commits lethal weapons and ammunition in support of Ukraine](#), 14 February 2022.

<sup>142</sup> CBC, [Canada to send additional \\$25 million in protective military gear to Ukraine](#), 27 February 2022.

<sup>143</sup> Reuters, [UPDATE 2-Japan relaxes arms export regime to fortify defence](#), 1 April 2014.

<sup>144</sup> Kyodo News, [Japan sends bulletproof vests from defense forces to Ukraine](#), 8 March 2022.

The Japanese government has taken the view that the “party to a conflict” term which is defined in the export rules as “a country against which the UN Security Council is taking measures to maintain or restore international peace and security in the event of an armed attack,” does not apply to Ukraine.<sup>145</sup>

## Turkey

Until recently Turkey was the only country other than the US to provide Ukraine with lethal arms.

In 2019, Ukraine purchased a number of Bayraktar drones from Turkey. Used primarily for reconnaissance, in October 2021 Ukrainian armed forces used them for the first time to strike targets in the Donbas, which provoked severe criticism from Russia.<sup>146</sup>

On 1 March, giving evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee, Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK, Vadym Prystaiko, confirmed that Ukraine needs more Bayraktar drones and “Turkey is supplying [them], but we are still far from being able to use them effectively”, he also confirmed that more Ukrainian drone operators were being trained in Turkey itself.<sup>147</sup>

## Montreux Convention and access to the Black Sea

On 24 February 2022, Ukraine asked Turkey to close the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits to Russian ships to stop them entering the Black Sea, according to Kyiv’s ambassador to Ankara.<sup>148</sup>

Under the 1936 Montreux Convention, Turkey has powers to restrict the movement of naval vessels to the Black Sea, and can limit the passage of warships during wartime or if threatened.<sup>149</sup> Turkey’s foreign minister stated on 25 February that Turkey could not implement the request as under the Convention vessels are allowed to return to their home base, which in this case was a Russian naval base in the Black Sea.<sup>150</sup>

On 27 February, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, described Russia’s military operations in Ukraine as a “war” raising expectation that Turkey could use its powers to under the Convention to limit the passage of warships, particularly Article 19.<sup>151</sup>

Article 19 applies when a war exists and Turkey is not party to the conflict. At such times, “warships shall enjoy complete freedom of transit and navigation through the Straits” under the normal peacetime rules. However, warships of

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<sup>145</sup> Kyodo News, [Japan sends bulletproof vests from defense forces to Ukraine](#), 8 March 2022.

<sup>146</sup> Alarabiya News, [“Putin criticises Ukraine’s use of Turkish drones in Erdogan call”](#), 3 December 2021

<sup>147</sup> Foreign Affairs Committee, [Oral evidence: Ukraine - 01 Q3 22](#), HC 1089, Q43.

<sup>148</sup> Al Jazeera. [Ukraine asks Turkey to shut Black Sea waterways to Russian ships](#), 24 February 2022.

<sup>149</sup> For further details see Reuters, [Factbox: Pact gives Turkey oversight of warship transit to Russia, Ukraine](#), 24 February 2022.

<sup>150</sup> Reuters, [Turkey says it cannot stop returning Russian warships from accessing Black Sea](#), 25 February 2022.

<sup>151</sup> Axios, [Turkey calls Russian invasion of Ukraine a “war”](#), 27 February 2022.

belligerent states “shall not ... pass through the Straits” except if (a) one of the belligerents is acting under lawful collective defence rights obligations or (b) any belligerent warship must pass through the straits to return to its base.<sup>152</sup>

On 28 February, Mr Cavusoglu “warned all riparian and non-riparian countries not to let warships go through the straits” i.e. any state, suggesting that Turkey would close the straits to all warships, not just those from Russia and Ukraine.<sup>153</sup> However, no formal declarations have been made by the Turkish Government, and it doesn’t appear yet to have taken any enforcement action.

### Turkey and NATO

Turkey is a NATO member, but while Turkey has condemned Russia’s attack on Ukraine as unacceptable it has avoided using the term invasion, and unlike almost all its NATO allies, does not support economic sanctions on Russia.<sup>154</sup>

Turkey angered its NATO allies, particularly the US, when in 2017 it agreed to buy the Russian S-400 air defence system. It received the first missiles in 2019, prompting the US to remove Turkey from its F-35 stealth fighter programme over security concerns. The Biden Administration said it could also sanction Turkey over the move.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Lawfare blog, [Turkey Must Close the Turkish Straits Only to Russian and Ukrainian Warships](#), 5 March 2022.

<sup>153</sup> Anadolu Agency, [Turkiye warns all countries against warships going through Turkish Straits](#), 28 February 2022.

<sup>154</sup> Reuters, [Turkey says it cannot stop returning Russian warships from accessing Black Sea](#), 25 February 2022.

<sup>155</sup> Reuters, [Turkey's Russian air defence systems and U.S. response](#), 1 October 2021.

## 7

## Is military assistance making a difference?

The consensus among analysts is that the tactics employed by the Ukrainian armed forces in conjunction with the arms provided by NATO and other allies, have had a significant effect on slowing the Russian military advance into Ukraine. The Financial Times describes:

Ukraine's success in repelling Russia's initial plan for a lightning advance and capture of Kyiv and other major cities owes much to its army's consistent ability to target and destroy vehicles, inflicting both heavy losses and large delays to advancing convoys.<sup>156</sup>

It details how small groups of Ukrainian troops, often armed only with shoulder-launched, portable rocket launchers — thousands of which have been provided by western countries since the invasion began — have used their terrain and Russia's tactics to their advantage, and “helped lead a resistance that has surprised even Kyiv's closest backers in the west”.<sup>157</sup>

The Ukrainian army's “consistent ability to target and destroy vehicles, inflicting both heavy losses and large delays to advancing convoys”, has been central to frustrating Russia's initial plan to quickly advance and capture major cities. The widespread use of troop-carried, shoulder-fired anti-tank missiles, such as the US-made Javelin, and UK-supplied NLAWs, have been critical to these tactics.<sup>158</sup>

However, the Russian military also appears to have changed tactics in the last few weeks increasingly turning to targeting civilians and attacking cities with artillery and long-range missiles.<sup>159</sup> The arms supplied by NATO and other allies so far may do little to protect Ukrainian citizens from these bombardments, or degrade the Russian forces launching them.

The Ukrainian Government are still asking for further military support, and for its allies to provide heavier and more lethal weapons.

<sup>156</sup> Financial Times, How is Ukraine using western weapons to exploit Russian weaknesses?, 16 March 2022

<sup>157</sup> Financial Times, How is Ukraine using western weapons to exploit Russian weaknesses?, 16 March 2022

<sup>158</sup> Financial Times, How is Ukraine using western weapons to exploit Russian weaknesses?, 16 March 2022

<sup>159</sup> See New York Times, Its offensive slowed, Russia uses long-range missiles to devastating effect, 19 March 2022; and Sky News, [War in Ukraine: The week mapped](#), March 2022.

In an interview with the Economist magazine on 22 March, Ukrainian Foreign Minister, Dmytro Kuleba, said:

We always realised that there would be no country fighting shoulder to shoulder with us, that it would be the cross that we have to bear. But to help us, countries can do two things: send us necessary weapons and impose sanctions.<sup>160</sup>

Asked about Western partners hesitancy to send bigger-ticket items such as tanks, armoured vehicles or planes, and their governments' worries about moving beyond what they call defensive weapons systems, Mr Kuleba argues: "Every weapon that is being used by the Ukrainian army in the territory of Ukraine is a defensive weapon by definition". He argued further that:

Those who make up these artificial divisions in their minds—we can give this, but we cannot give that—they only extend the suffering of Ukrainians, they contribute to the toll of dead civilians, and they only facilitate the further destruction of Ukrainian cities and villages.<sup>161</sup>

More weapons may be insufficient if the conflict continues. Nick Reynolds, Land warfare research analyst at RUSI, argues that the Ukrainian military needs further professionalisation, reform and training, and that if it "survives the next few days, weeks and months, international assistance will inevitably have to widen from immediate technical capability concerns to institutional inefficiencies and frictions once again".<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> The Economist, [Ukraine's foreign minister warns of faltering European resolve](#), 22 March 2022.

<sup>161</sup> The Economist, [Ukraine's foreign minister warns of faltering European resolve](#), 22 March 2022.

<sup>162</sup> RUSI, Nick Reynolds, [Security Force Assistance to Ukraine and the Failure of Deterrence](#), 1 March 2022.



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