

Russia and the Baltic states

An overview of military budgets, key events and NATO battlegroups in the region

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Russia’s military is far larger than those of the Baltic states

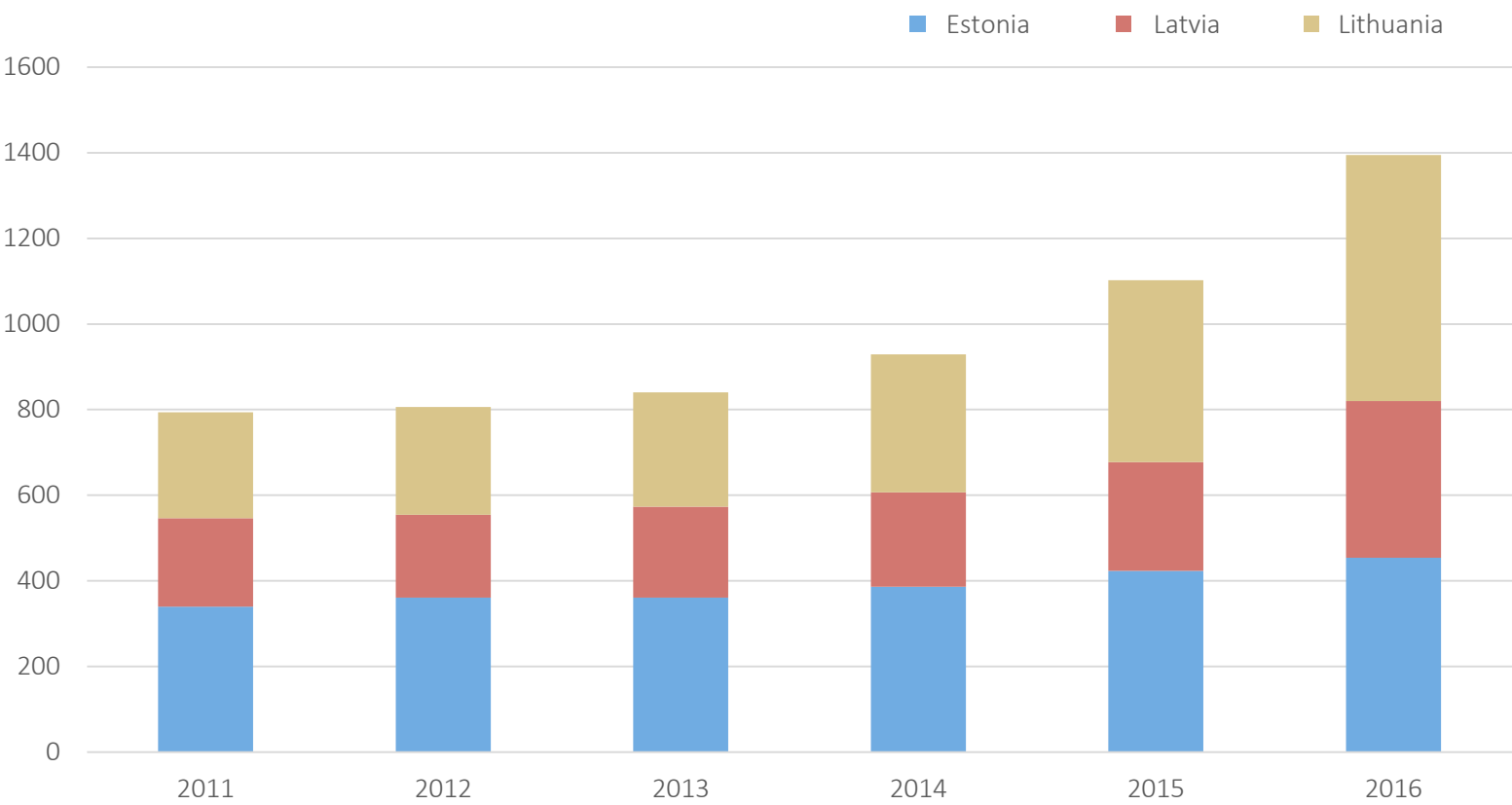
An overview of key military statistics

Country	Active military personnel	Reserve military personnel	Total military personnel	Total aircraft assets	Total naval assets
Russia	766,055	2,485,000	3,251,055	3,794	352
Estonia	3,500	60,000	63,500	6	6
Latvia	13,000	11,000	24,000	4	18
Lithuania	15,000	4,260	19,260	10	12

Sources: “2017 Military Strength,” Global Fire Power, 2017.

Baltic defense spending has increased exponentially in light of Russian aggression

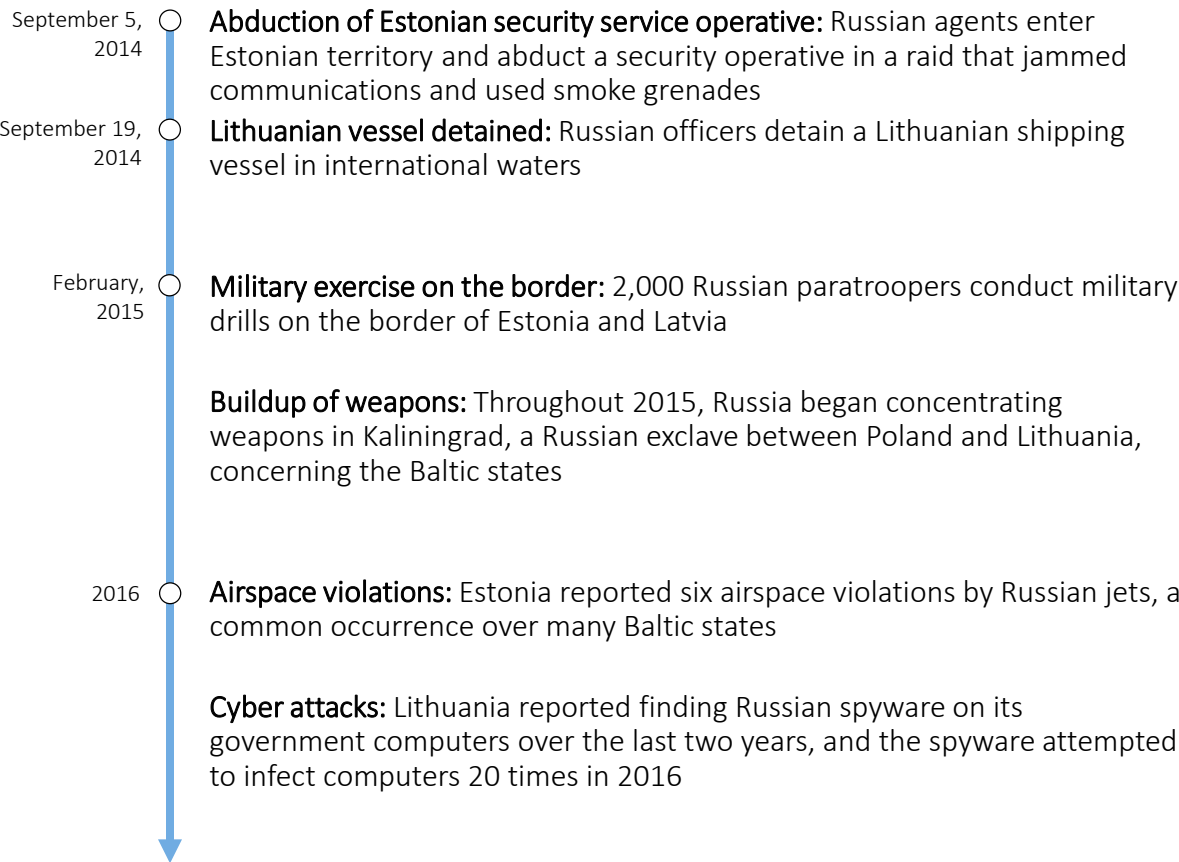
Total defense expenditures, millions of Euros



Sources: "Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries," NATO, March 13, 2017

Timeline of key recent Russian intrusions in the Baltic states

Overview of incidents from 2014 on



Sources: Thomas Frear, "List of Close Military Encounters Between Russia and the West," European Leadership Network; Henry Foy, Kathrin Hille, Richard Milne, "Russia: Border Tensions," Financial Times, June 9, 2015; Andrius Sytas, "Lithuania said found Russian spyware on its government computers," Reuters, December 21, 2016

Military exercise will put 100,000 Russian troops on NATO's eastern border

Baltic countries are preparing for the large buildup of troops



The exercise:

- The upcoming Russian military exercise, Zapad 2017, will put 100,000 troops on NATO's border
- The exercise generally takes place every year with Belarus and simulates a full-scale conflict with the West
- This will be the first such military exercise since Russia annexed Crimea in 2014



Concern in the Baltics:

- Baltic officials have expressed concern that Russia could leave troops in Belarus after the exercise ends
- Increasing anxiety further over the exercise, Russian politicians have begun suggesting that certain Lithuanian provinces were given to the country by Joseph Stalin- rhetoric reminiscent of the Russian government's claims of historical ownership of Crimea and eastern Ukraine
- US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis called the military exercise "simply destabilizing," even if it goes to plan



Steps to prepare:

- Lithuanian Minister of Defense Raimundas Karoblis plans to treat it as just an exercise, but remains prepared in case of border protection checks or if the troops move a different direction than planned
- The Baltic states have increased their military budgets, but largely rely on their allies in NATO and the EU for assistance and protection

Sources: Caroline Houck, "A Giant Russian Exercise Will Soon Put 100,000 Troops on NATO's Border. Then What?" Defense One, June 12, 2017

NATO’s enhanced forward presence to deter and defend against increasing Russian aggression

An overview of the battlegroups on the eastern border of the alliance

Location	Framework nation	Contributing nation	Troop numbers
Tapa, Estonia	United Kingdom	France, Denmark*	1100
Adazi, Latvia	Canada	Albania, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Spain	1138
Rukla, Lithuania	Germany	Belgium, Croatia*, Czech Republic*, France*, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway	1022
Orzysz, Poland	United States	Romania, United Kingdom	1270

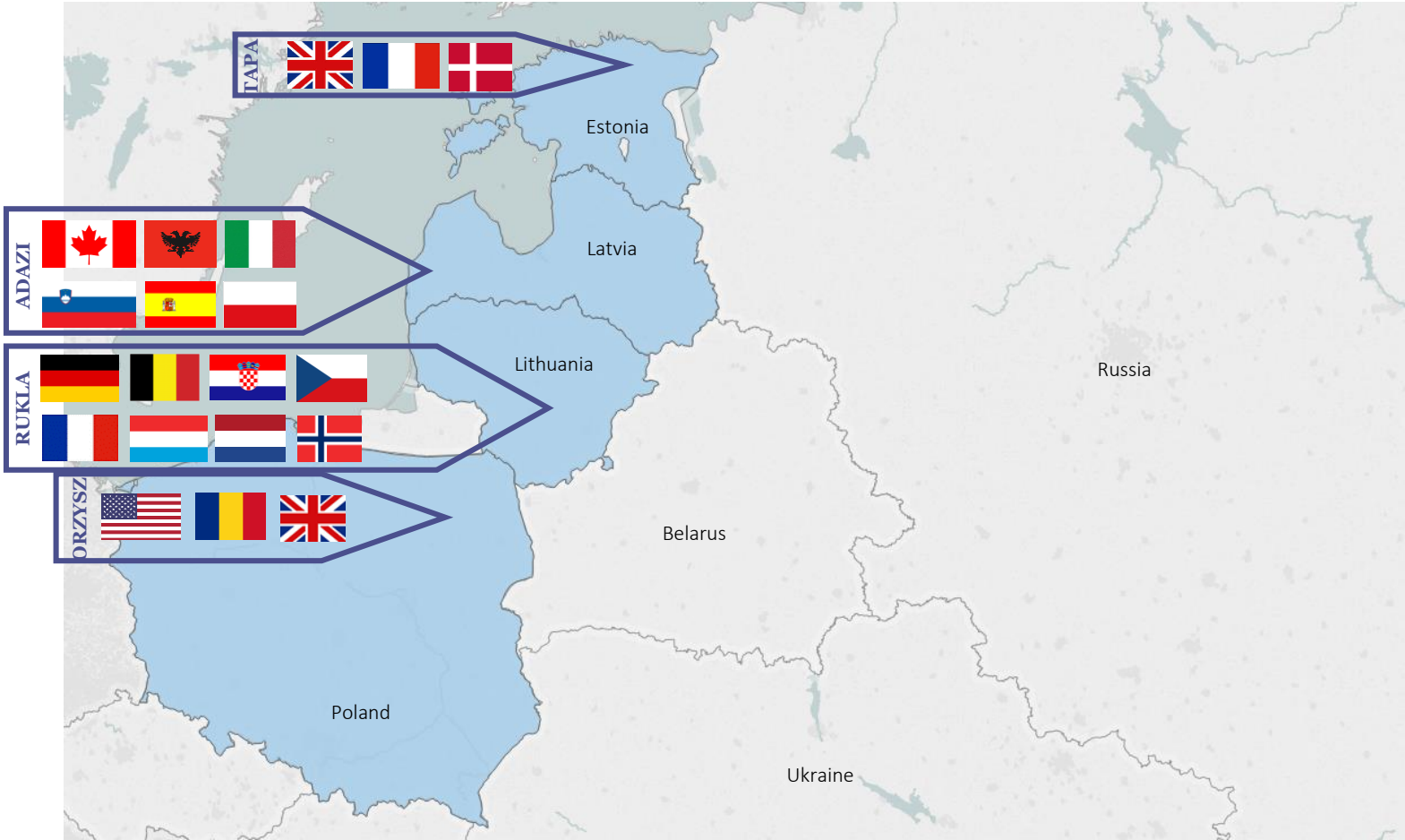
* Indicates contribution in 2018

Overview of NATO’s enhanced forward presence:

- NATO members pledged to contribute troops to the eastern flank at the **2016 Warsaw Summit**
- Battlegroups are **led by one framework nation** and helped by contributing nations
- The battlegroups are intended to show NATO’s **“strengthened deterrence and defense posture”** and is a reminder of the alliance’s **commitment to Article 5**

Sources: “NATO’s Enhanced Forward Presence,” NATO, May 2017.

NATO's battlegroups visualized



Sources: "NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence," NATO, May 2017.