bicc report

GMI 2024

Global Militarisation Index

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Summary

Despite the global increase in military spending, only a minority of states are following an armament trend. In only 52 of the 149 countries covered by the GMI has the volume of military expenditure, personnel and weapons increased relative to civilian benchmarks in recent years. And yet, there are a number of countries where relative investment in the armed forces has barely changed or even declined recently. 81 countries stand out for their demilitarisation.

Looking regionally, it is striking that Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are the two most militarised regions. Countries in South America and Sub-Saharan Africa, however, tend to invest significantly less in their armed forces, also relative to their economic output and population.

Ukraine is one of the most militarised countries in the world and is by far the highest ranked country in the GMI. Other highly militarised countries include Israel, Lebanon, Armenia, Qatar, Russia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Greece. These countries allocate particularly high levels of resources to the armed forces in comparison to other areas of society. Not surprisingly, this is particularly the case where military conflicts are taking place or have recently taken place.

The countries bringing up the rear of the GMI are Haiti, Malta, Mauritius, Cape Verde, Papua New Guinea, Trinidad and Tobago, Guatemala, Ireland, Ghana and Madagascar. Ireland’s low level of militarisation shows that a relatively high level of internal stability and security can be achieved with low levels of investment in the military sector. Other countries, such as Haiti and Papua New Guinea, struggle to effectively enforce the authority of the state throughout their territory.

METHODOLOGY

bicc's Global Militarisation Index (GMI) maps the relative weight and importance of a country's military apparatus in relation to its society as a whole. For this, the GMI records a number of indicators to represent the level of militarisation of a country:

- the comparison of military expenditures with its gross domestic product (GDP) and its health expenditure (as share of its GDP);
- the contrast between the total number of (para)military forces and the number of physicians and the overall population;
- the ratio of the number of heavy weapons systems available and the number of the overall population.

The GMI is based on data from the Stockholm Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and bicc. It shows the levels of militarisation of more than 150 states since 1990. bicc provides yearly updates. As soon as new data is available, bicc corrects the GMI values retroactively for previous years (corrected data on gmi.bicc.de). This may have the effect that current ranks may differ in comparison to previous GMI publications.

To increase the compatibility between different indicators and to prevent extreme values from creating distortions when normalising data, in a first step, every indicator has been represented in a logarithm with the factor 10. Second, all data have been normalised using the formula x=(y-min)/(max-min), with min and max representing, respectively, the lowest and the highest value of the logarithm.

In a third step, each indicator has been weighted and attributed a subjective factor, reflecting the relative importance attributed to it by bicc researchers. To calculate the final score, the weighted indicator values have been added up and then normalised one last time on a scale from 0 to 500.

The GMI conducts a detailed analysis of specific regional or national developments. By doing so, bicc wants to contribute to the debate on pros and cons of militarisation.

The ΔGMI indicator reflects the trend in militarisation by means of a moving average. The average of the GMI values for the last two years (2022 and 2023) is calculated and compared with the average from the previous year (2021 and 2022). As a result, temporary changes caused mainly by fluctuations in the reference values (such as GDP) are minimised.

GMI INDICATORS AND WEIGHING FACTORS

Sub-index/ Indicator	**Factor**
Expenditures	
Military expenditures as percentage of GDP	5
Military expenditures in relation to health spending	3
Personnel	
Military and paramilitary personnel in relation to population	4
Military reserves in relation to population	2
Military and paramilitary personnel in relation to physicians	2
Weapons	
Heavy weapons in relation to population	4

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Not surprisingly, the most militarised countries are currently at war or have recently been at war.

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GMI 2024: The Top 10

The ten countries with the strongest militarisation in the current GMI are: Ukraine (1), Israel (2), Lebanon (3), Armenia (4), Qatar (5), Russia (6), Bahrain (7), Kuwait (8), Saudi Arabia (9) and Greece (10). These countries allocate particularly high levels of resources to the armed forces in comparison to other areas of society. Not surprisingly, this is particularly the case in countries that are currently at war or have recently been at war. The GMI is not a normative index. This means that a high level of militarisation is not necessarily always problematic. For example, it could be plausibly argued that the high levels of militarisation in Israel, Armenia and Ukraine are justified and necessary given the threats these countries face.

TABLE 1: TOP 10

Country	$			GMI	ΔGMI	Rank	
Ukraine	5,2	1,4	1,8	**351,1**	**156,1**	1	(0)
Israel	2,4	1,7	3,0	**262,3**	**-5,9**	2	(0)
Lebanon	2,9	1,2	2,5	**246,2**	**21,3**	3	(+10)
Armenia	2,3	1,4	1,4	**243,3**	**3,8**	4	(0)
Qatar	3,2	0,8	2,3	**229,6**	**9,1**	5	(-2)
Russia	2,5	1,0	2,3	**215,5**	**7,3**	6	(1)
Bahrain	1,9	0,6	2,7	**215,4**	**-13,9**	7	(-2)
Kuwait	2,4	0,7	2,7	**210,4**	**-12,1**	8	(+1)
Saudi Arabia	2,8	0,7	2,1	**209,8**	**-6,6**	9	(+2)
Greece	1,8	1,2	2,7	**208,5**	**5,9**	10	(-4)

In 2024, as in the previous year, **Ukraine** remains in first place and is the most militarised country in the GMI. Defence against Russia's war of aggression continues to consume immense resources, whether in the form of capital, military technology or soldiers. In 2024, the Ukrainian government announced a further increase in its military budget to US $90 billion—almost 40 per cent more than in 2023.[1] As a result, military spending is expected to account for almost 50 per cent of gross domestic product. This compares to just 3.4 per cent in 2021. An estimated 1.3 million Ukrainians are currently under arms. While the number of heavy weapon systems was declining between 2021 and 2022 due to high losses, the numbers increased slightly between 2022 and 2023.

Before Russia's attack on Ukraine, **Israel** had led the GMI ranking since 2007. The constant share of military expenditure in GDP, around five per cent, is exceptionally high for a highly developed OECD country. Military service, followed by reserve duty, is compulsory for most Israeli men and women. The massacre by the terrorist group Hamas on 7 October 2023 and the massive Iranian rocket attacks in April and October 2024 illustrate the major and existential threat that the relatively small country has faced since its founding. In recent years, there has been a trend towards demilitarisation in Israel (see trends in (de-)militarisation). However, in the context of the ongoing war, the government recently approved an increase in military spending to an estimated 6.5 per cent of GDP by 2025.[2]

Lebanon, which borders Israel, has climbed from thirteenth to third place in the GMI. Lebanon has recently been the target of repeated Israeli attacks. Still, Lebanon's absolute military expenditure fell by almost 90 per cent between 2018 and 2023, from US $2.77 billion to US $241 million,[3] and the country has seen a very high demilitarisation trend in recent years. The reason for its high ranking in the GMI is the significant

[1] https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraine-amends-2024-budget-channel-more-funds-defence-2024-09-18/ (30.01.2025)
[2] https://en.globes.co.il/en/article-second-only-to-ukraine-the-cost-of-israels-defense-burden-1001493121 (30.01.2025)
[3] SIPRI Military Expenditure Database: https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex (30.01.2025)

decline in GDP over the same period.[4] For example, despite declining budgets, Lebanon's military expenditure as a share of GDP increased from 2.9 per cent in 2022 to 8.9 per cent in 2023.

Armenia (rank 4) remains in the GMI's top ten in 2024. In 2023, the share of military expenditure to GDP rose to 5.5 per cent (2022: 4.1 per cent). This increase is linked to an escalation in the long-running conflict with Azerbaijan (rank 13) over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Azerbaijan managed to retake the region in a military confrontation in September 2023. Despite a ceasefire, tensions remain high. In 2024, the Armenian government announced a 20 per cent increase in military spending in 2025.[5] Azerbaijan responded shortly afterwards by also announcing a planned increase in its defence budget for 2025[6], continuing the dangerous arms race in the Caucasus.

Of the ten most militarised countries in the GMI, four are Gulf Arab states: **Qatar** (rank 5), **Bahrain** (rank 7), **Kuwait** (rank 8) and **Saudi Arabia** (rank 9). Oman is ranked eleventh in the GMI. The high ranking is partly due to the fact that some of the countries are small and sparsely populated. In this context, a comparatively large number of soldiers or heavy weapon systems has an even greater impact on the GMI. However, conflicts and uncertainties in the region are likely to be more significant. These include rivalries with Iran, the unstable situation in Iraq and the recent war waged by many Arab states against the Houthi rebels in Yemen. Saudi Arabia now has the world's fifth-largest military budget, estimated at US $75.8 billion[7] (after the United States, China, Russia and India).

[4] https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/12/10/lebanon-s-economic-contraction-deepens-highlighting-critical-need-for-reforms-and-key-investments (30.01.2025)
[5] https://oc-media.org/armenia-announces-20-boost-to-military-spending/ (30.01.2025)
[6] https://caspiannews.com/news-detail/azerbaijan-increases-2025-defense-budget-amid-armenias-military-build-up-2024-11-18-20/ (30.01.2025)
[7] SIPRI, "Trends in World Military Expenditure", 2023: https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/2404_fs_milex_2023.pdf (30.01.2025)

Russia climbed four places onto sixth position in the GMI 2024. It has the world's third-largest military budget, and military spending as a percentage of GDP was estimated at six per cent in 2023. In 2024, Russia's military budget was at a level unprecedented in the country's recent history. In 2025, military spending is expected to rise by a further 22 per cent[8]. The reason for these massive increases is its war on Ukraine since February 2022. Heavy fighting continues, with Russia recently gaining the upper hand. At the same time, Russia's massive losses are reflected in the number of heavy weapon systems, for example, which, according to our data, was 15 per cent lower in 2023 than in the previous year.

Greece drops from rank 7 to 10 in this GMI. Military expenditure as a percentage of GDP fell from four per cent in 2022 to 3.2 per cent in 2023. Nevertheless, the militarisation trend of the last four years continues. Greece thus remains the NATO member with the highest level of militarisation in the GMI. One reason for Greece's traditionally high military expenditure is the territorial dispute with its neighbour Turkey.

[8] https://www.nzz.ch/international/russland-militaerausgaben-im-naechsten-jahr-auf-rekordniveau-ld.1849999 (30.01.2025)

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Some countries at the bottom of the GMI have in common that they face difficulties in effectively enforcing state sovereignty over their territory.

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The Lowest-ranked Countries

The less a state invests in its military, the more resources are potentially available for other, civilian, sectors, be it education or health. However, a low GMI ranking is not always a positive development. The least militarised countries therefore deserve a differentiated assessment.

TABLE 2: THE LOWEST-RANKED COUNTRIES

Country	$			GMI	ΔGMI	Rank	
Madagascar	0,7	0,5	0,1	**45,7**	**-0,7**	140	(-1)
Ghana	0,4	0,4	0,4	**44,1**	**1,4**	141	(2)
Ireland	0,2	0,2	0,8	**43,5**	**-2,8**	142	(0)
Guatemala	0,4	0,4	0,4	**42,6**	**-0,3**	143	(-2)
Trinidad and Tobago	0,8	0,3	0,0	**38,7**	**-1,1**	144	(0)
Papua New Guinea	0,4	0,5	0,0	**34,1**	**-1,4**	145	(0)
Cape Verde	0,5	0,4	0,0	**33,5**	**-3,1**	146	(1)
Mauritius	0,2	0,2	0,5	**32,6**	**-0,7**	147	(-1)
Malta	0,5	0,3	0,0	**27,5**	**-3,1**	148	(0)
Haiti	0,1	0,1	0,0	**3,5**	**-2,4**	149	(0)

The least militarised countries in the GMI 2024 are Haiti (rank 149), Malta (rank 148), Mauritius (rank 147), Cape Verde (rank 146), Papua New Guinea (rank 145), Trinidad and Tobago (rank 144), Guatemala (rank 143), Ireland (rank 142), Ghana (rank 141) and Madagascar (rank 140). Initially, it is striking that some very small and relatively stable island states are among the lowest ranked countries (**Malta, Mauritius, Cape Verde**). The absence of direct military threats and their geopolitical location may explain the comparatively small armed forces of such maritime countries. At the same time, they demonstrate that relatively high levels of internal stability and security can be achieved with low levels of military spending. This also applies to Ireland and Ghana, which, as larger states, deserve more attention.

Ireland (rank 142) is the least militarised country in Europe in the GMI. Although a member of the European Union, Ireland is not a member of NATO and has a neutral foreign policy. Military expenditure was just 0.2 per cent of GDP in 2023, well below the European average. Although the last four years have seen a trend towards demilitarisation, there are signs of a reversal. The Irish government has proposed to increase military spending by €100 million to a total of €1.35 billion by 2025. This is in response to the threat posed by Russia in Europe.[9]

Ghana (rank 141) is considered a relatively stable country in Sub-Saharan Africa and particularly in West Africa, despite being surrounded by many violent conflicts in its immediate neighbourhood. In 2023, Ghana spent 0.4 per cent of its GDP on its defence budget. However, there has been some militarisation in recent years. In the north of the country, violent clashes with armed Islamist groups from the Sahel region are on the rise. Analysts expect Ghana's military expenditure to rise steadily over the next five years.[10]

The other countries at the bottom of the GMI have in common that they face difficulties in effectively enforcing state sovereignty over their territory. The GMI only reflects government investment in the military. It does not capture broader societal dynamics of militarisation, such as the general prevalence of small arms or the strength of non-state armed groups. The Fragile State Index for **Madagascar** (rank 140) is at a 'high alert' level for 2023.[11] **Trinidad and Tobago** (rank 144)

[9] https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/9913d-press-release-record-allocation-of-135-billion-in-defence-funding-in-budget-2025/ (30.01.2025)
[10] https://www.marketresearch.com/GlobalData-v3648/Ghana-Defense-Size-Trends-Budget-36257372/ (30.01.2025)
[11] https://fragilestatesindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FSI-2023-Report_final.pdf (30.01.2025)

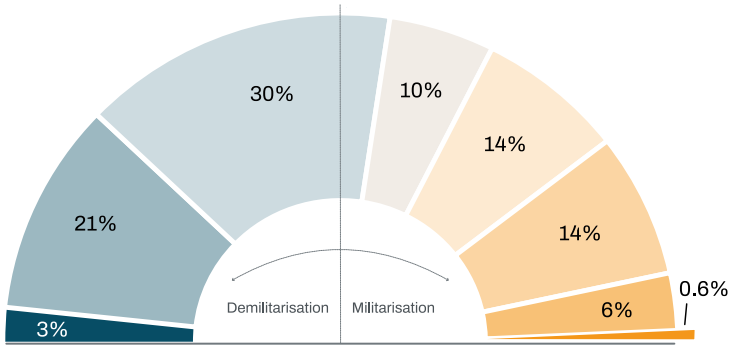
declared a state of emergency in December 2024 to counter high homicide rates.[12] **Guatemala** (rank 143) struggles with high crime rates and widespread organised crime.[13] In the remote areas of **Papua New Guinea** (rank 145), there is virtually no state security provision. Armed gangs massacred dozens of women and children, most recently in the summer of 2024.[14] **Haiti** comes last in the GMI. The government only controls parts of the capital, while most of the country is in the hands of criminal gangs.

Global Trends in (De-) Militarisation

[12] https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cz9eg8w32yzo (30.01.2025)
[13] https://ocindex.net/country/guatemala (30.01.2025)
[14] https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cpwdp58z3gjo (30.01.2025)

The Stockholm Peace Research Institute SIPRI put global military expenditures in 2023 at US $2,443 billion, an all-time high. An arms race is in full swing in Europe and parts of Asia. The last time the world saw such a level of militarisation was probably at the height of the Cold War. However, militarisation trends are not the same in all countries. While some are investing more and more resources in their armed forces, others are doing the opposite. Figure 2 provides an overview of which states have tended to stand out in terms of significant or high trends in militarisation or demilitarisation over the past four years.

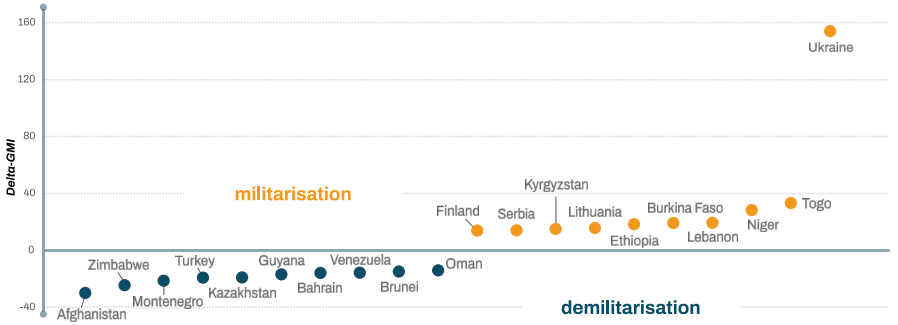
FIGURE 1: GLOBAL TRENDS IN (DE-)MILITARISATION



Trend in (De-)Militarisation		2-Year Delta GMI	Countries
Very high demilitarisation		< -45	0
High demilitarisation		< -15	5
Significant demilitarisation		< -5	31
Low demilitarisation		< -1	45
Neutral		(-1 < 1)	15
Low militarisation		>1	21
Significant militarisation		>5	21
High militarisation		>15	9
Very high militarisation		>45	1

In fact, despite new record levels, only a minority of all states follow an armament trend. In 52 of the 149 countries covered by the GMI, the volume of military expenditure, personnel and weapons increased relative to comparable civilian expenditures. Of these, ten countries were characterised by very high or high militarisation, and 21 by significant militarisation (see Figure 1). Ukraine continues to top the list, with a value of Δ156.08, well ahead of all other countries. Togo, in second place, only just manages Δ35.22. Niger (Δ30.19) and Burkina Faso (Δ21.14) are two West African countries among the nine with a high militarisation trend, which are ruled by the military due to coups that took place not so long ago. However, further armament in Liberia (Δ14.27), Guinea (Δ12.13) and Benin (Δ11.93) also appears to be part of a larger militarisation trend in the conflict-ridden region.

FIGURE 2: COUNTRIES WITH SIGNIFICANT TO VERY HIGH TRENDS IN (DE-)MILITARISATION



The arms race between Kyrgyzstan (Δ16.93) and Tajikistan (Δ13.74)—two states that were involved in bloody clashes along their common border as recently as 2022—has not received much attention in Europe. Ultimately, militarisation in Europe is most noticeable in Russia's imme-

diate neighbours, who feel threatened by Russia's attack on Ukraine. Lithuania (Δ17.71) and Finland (Δ15.77) are striking examples. Significant militarisation trends can also be observed in Denmark (Δ7.52), Latvia (Δ6.26) and Russia itself (Δ7.27). Germany, on the other hand, has shown a relatively low militarisation trend in recent years, with a value of Δ2.10.

And yet, there were a number of countries where the relative investment in the armed forces has hardly changed or even decreased in recent years. This may not always be due to an increase in absolute military expenditure. It could also be related to an increase in gross domestic product or population growth. With a value of Δ0.84, one can hardly speak of a significant militarisation trend in the United States, which can afford, by far, the largest military budget in the world. In contrast, 81 countries showed a low (45), significant (31) or high (5) trend in demilitarisation—more than half of the 149 countries in the GMI. The country with the largest relative reduction in military expenditure, personnel and heavy weapons systems was Afghanistan (Δ-28.08), where the national armed forces were disbanded after the Taliban took power in 2021. Among the countries with high and significant demilitarisation dynamics, there is a remarkably large number of countries from the Middle East, a highly conflict-ridden and highly militarised region. For example, the GMI 2024 shows that there is a high demilitarisation trend in Turkey (Δ-17.27) and a significant, albeit on a high scale, demilitarisation trend in Bahrain (Δ-13. 92), Oman (Δ-12.18), Kuwait (Δ-12.10), Iraq (Δ-8.89), Saudi Arabia (Δ-6.56), Israel (Δ-5.94), Egypt (Δ-5.50) and Morocco (Δ-5.33). Whether and to what extent the current highly dynamic events in the region (the war in Gaza and southern Lebanon, the fall of the Assad regime in Syria) will reinforce, slow down or possibly reverse this trend remains to be seen.

Militarisation According to Regions

It is not only domestic factors that influence a country's level of militarisation. Regional dynamics also play a role. Countries whose neighbours arm themselves often feel compelled to follow suit, which can lead to an arms race. Levels of militarisation vary in different regions of the world. In what follows, we highlight regional patterns of global militarisation. It is particularly striking that Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are the two most militarised regions. By contrast, countries in South America and Sub-Saharan Africa tend to invest significantly less in their armed forces, also in relation to their economic output and population size.

The Americas

The GMI covers 23 states in the Americas, including all major countries except Cuba. The **United States** spent US $916 billion on its military in 2023, more than any other country and accounting for 37 per cent of global military spending.[15] At the same time, the United States ranks 28th in the GMI and is therefore considered highly militarised. It is the world's largest military power and the most militarised country in the region. No other country in the Americas spends more public resources on its armed forces relative to its economic output and population.

The region as a whole only shows some degree of militarisation. Sixteen of the 23 states included in the GMI show little (6) or very little (10) militarisation. The interstate territorial conflict between Vene-

TABLE 3: THE AMERICAS

Rank	GMI Rank	Country
1	28	United States of America
2	48	Uruguay
3	61	Chile
4	71	Colombia
5	80	Ecuador
6	82	Peru
7	87	El Salvador
8	92	Venezuela
9	93	Bolivia
10	95	Nicaragua
11	98	Canada
12	108	Honduras
13	116	Brazil
14	121	Jamaica
15	127	Dominican Republic
16	128	Paraguay
17	134	Argentina
18	135	Guyana
19	136	Belize
20	137	Mexico
21	143	Guatemala
22	144	Trinidad and Tobago
23	149	Haiti

very strong
strong
moderate
little
very little

[15] SIPRI, “Trends in World Military Expenditure”, 2023: https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/2404_fs_milex_2023.pdf (30.01.2025)

zuela (rank 92, little) and Guyana (rank 135, very little) has not led to an arms build-up. Many of the countries that invest comparatively little in their military are smaller Caribbean states. It is worth noting that many of these states suffer from high levels of organised crime and gang violence. This is true of **Haiti,** which can be found at the very bottom of the GMI (rank 149, very weak), as well as countries such as **Honduras** (rank 108, weak) and **Guatemala** (rank 143, very weak). But **Mexico** also has very little militarisation, despite enormous challenges in the fight against non-state criminal gangs. It is ranked only 137th in the GMI.

Europe

Since Russia's attack on Ukraine, Europe has experienced an arms build-up, the likes of which have not been seen since the climax of the Cold War. The GMI includes 41 countries in the region, covering all that are relevant. It does not include countries that have no military capabilities of their own, such as Iceland. Four European countries are in the top 10 of the GMI: **Greece** (rank 10, very strong), **Russia** (rank 6, very strong), **Armenia** (rank 4, very strong) and—far ahead of all others—**Ukraine** (rank 1, very strong). Eleven countries are in the top quintile, and another 11 are in the second highest category, 'strong'. This means that just over half of all states in Europe have a very strong or strong militarisation. This includes many Baltic and Eastern European countries bordering Russia or its ally **Belarus** (rank 18, very strong), such as **Lithuania** (rank 21, very strong), **Finland** (rank 22, very strong), **Estonia** (rank 23, very strong), **Poland** (rank 32, strong), **Georgia** (rank 44, strong) or **Latvia** (rank 57, strong). In contrast, only six of the 41 countries included in the GMI are classified as having very little or little militarisation. It is particularly striking that **Germany**

TABLE 4: EUROPE

Rank	GMI Rank	Country
1	1	Ukraine
2	4	Armenia
3	6	Russia
4	10	Greece
5	13	Azerbaijan
6	18	Belarus
7	19	Cyprus
8	21	Lithuania
9	22	Finland
10	23	Estonia
11	25	Serbia
12	32	Poland
13	34	Montenegro
14	39	Romania
15	44	Georgia
16	50	Croatia
17	51	Norway
18	53	Denmark
19	55	Bulgaria
20	56	France
21	57	Latvia
22	60	Slovakia
23	64	Sweden
24	65	Hungary
25	66	Switzerland
26	69	Italy
27	70	Slovenia
28	72	United Kingdom
29	74	Portugal
30	79	Spain
31	81	Moldova
32	84	Czech Republic
33	86	Netherlands
34	88	Luxembourg
35	89	Bosnia and Herzegovina
36	91	Belgium
37	94	Germany
38	97	Austria
39	101	Albania
40	142	Ireland
41	148	Malta

very strong
strong
moderate
little
very little

(rank 94, little) occupies one of the lowest positions in Europe, partly due to its economic strength. It is well behind **France** (rank 56, high) and the **United Kingdom** (rank 72, moderate). However, German military spending is likely to increase significantly over the next few years.

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

The MENA region is plagued by a multitude of violent conflicts. **Israel** (rank 2, very strong) fought the terrorist organisation Hamas in Gaza until a ceasefire at the end of January 2025 and is still fighting Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. **Iran** (rank 38, strong) and Israel have repeatedly fired missiles at each other over the past year. The Assad regime in Syria has been toppled, while Islamist groups in the region are gaining strength. Conflicts between **Turkey** (rank 36, strong) and Kurdish groups, and between Sunni and Shia-dominated states, continue. The war against the Houthi militia in Yemen, led by **Saudi Arabia** (rank 9, very strong), has slowed down but could flare up again at any time. Against this backdrop, it is hardly surprising that the Middle East is the most militarised region in the world. The GMI covers 15 countries in the MENA region. Due to a lack of recent data, there are no GMI scores for the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Syria, Yemen and Libya, but it is reasonable to assume that the UAE's militarisation is similar to that of the other Arab Gulf states. All of the MENA states included in the GMI show either a strong or very strong militarisation—without exception. In fact, six of the 15 states rank in the top ten. The region is an important market for US and European arms.

TABLE 5: MENA

Rank	GMI Rank	Country
1	2	Israel
2	3	Lebanon
3	5	Qatar
4	7	Bahrain
5	8	Kuwait
6	9	Saudi Arabia
7	11	Oman
8	14	Algeria
9	15	Jordan
10	26	Morocco
11	30	Iraq
12	36	Turkey
13	38	Iran
14	47	Egypt
15	52	Tunisia

very strong
strong

Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa is also the theatre of a number of bloody conflicts. Armed jihadist groups are active in countries such as **Mali** (rank 43, strong), Somalia, **Nigeria** (rank 132, very little) and **Burkina Faso** (rank 63, moderate). In **Sudan** (rank 90, moderate), rival units of the security forces are fighting each other. The humanitarian situation is catastrophic. By the end of 2022, a civil war in the Tigray region of **Ethiopia** (rank 99, little) is estimated to have cost half a million lives. Despite this, military spending in Sub-Saharan Africa is low, unlike in the Middle East, for example. The region accounts for only 0.9 per cent of global military investment[16] and even as a proportion of its own economic output, the allocation of resources to the state military is lower than in Europe or

[16] SIPRI, "Trends in World Military Expenditure", 2023: https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/2404_fs_milex_2023.pdf (30.01.2025)

the MENA region. The GMI covers 44 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. A quarter of them have a strong (2) or very strong (9) militarisation. In contrast, just over half have very little (13) or little (10) militarisation. It is interesting to note that many regional heavyweights in the region rank lower in the GMI—such as **Ethiopia** (rank 99, little), **South Africa** (rank 118, little), **Nigeria** (rank 132, very little), **Kenya** (rank 133, very little) or **Ghana** (rank 141, very little). Eritrea, which in previous GMI rankings was regularly ranked as one of the most militarised countries in the region (and presumably still is), is no longer included due to a lack of recent data.

TABLE 6: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Rank	GMI Rank	Country
1	20	South Sudan
2	27	Botswana
3	31	Togo
4	35	Chad
5	37	Mauritania
6	40	Namibia
7	43	Mali
8	46	Congo, Republic of
9	48	Burundi
10	54	Angola
11	59	Niger
12	62	Gabon
13	63	Burkina Faso
14	68	Guinea-Bissau
15	73	Equatorial Guinea
16	75	Central African Republic
17	76	Rwanda
18	77	Uganda
19	83	Senegal
20	85	Guinea
21	90	Sudan
22	99	Ethiopia
23	100	Mozambique
24	105	Cameroon
25	106	Benin
26	110	Zambia
27	111	Liberia
28	112	Tanzania
29	115	Swaziland
30	118	South Africa
31	120	DR Congo
32	122	Zimbabwe
33	124	Malawi
34	125	Cote D'Ivoire
35	126	Seychelles
36	129	Lesotho
37	130	Gambia
38	132	Nigeria
39	133	Kenya
40	138	Sierra Leone
41	140	Madagascar
42	141	Ghana
43	146	Cape Verde
44	147	Mauritius

very strong
strong
moderate
little
very little

Asia, Australia and Oceania

In Asia, Australia and Oceania, the GMI covers 26 states. There are some gaps here. For example, there is no GMI score for North Korea, despite strong evidence that it is one of the most militarised countries in the world (see the GMI 2022). In Central Asia, data is missing for Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and in Southeast Asia for Laos and Vietnam. The picture that emerges from the included countries is one of significant variation in the level of militarisation: Ten countries show a very strong (5) and strong (5) militarisation. The strong militarisation in **South Korea** (rank 17, very strong) and **Pakistan** (rank 45, strong) are probably due to conflicts with neighbouring states (North Korea and **India,** rank 78, moderate). **Myanmar** (rank 42, strong) is in the midst of a civil war. It is worth noting that **China** is ranked only 102nd in the GMI, and can therefore be considered to only show little militarisation. After all, China has the second-largest military budget in the world (after the United States), estimated at US $296 billion annually (2023)[17]. This means that, unlike the highly militarised United States, China spends relatively little on its military relative to its economic output and population.

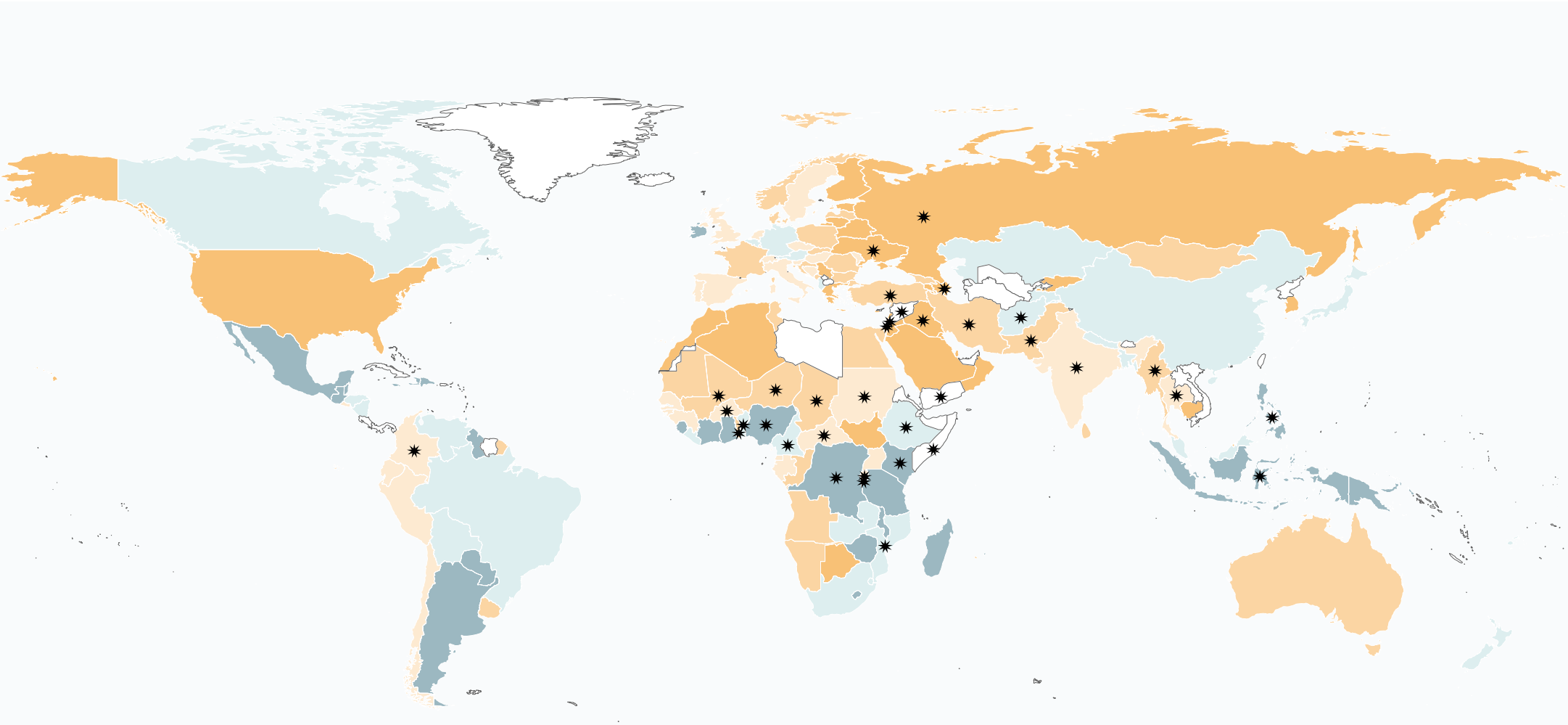
[17] SIPRI, "Trends in World Military Expenditure", 2023: https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/2404_fs_milex_2023.pdf (30.01.2025)

TABLE 7: ASIA, AUSTRALIA AND OCEANIA

Rank	GMI Rank	Country
1	12	Singapore
2	16	Brunei
3	17	South Korea
4	24	Cambodia
5	29	Kyrgyzstan
6	33	Mongolia
7	42	Myanmar
8	45	Pakistan
9	49	Sri Lanka
10	58	Australia
11	67	Thailand
12	78	India
13	96	Kazakhstan
14	102	China
15	103	Malaysia
16	104	Afghanistan
17	107	Japan
18	109	Fiji
19	113	Nepal
20	114	New Zealand
21	117	Tajikistan
22	119	Bangladesh
23	123	Phillipines
24	131	Indonesia
25	139	Timor-Leste
26	145	Papua New Guinea

very strong
strong
moderate
little
very little

MAP 1: GLOBAL MILITARISATION 2024



Source conflict data: *Based on UCDP 24.1 data*

Sources of administrative boudaries: *Natural Earth Dataset*

Rank 1-30 | Rank 31-60 | Rank 61-90 | Rank 91-120 | Rank > 120 | No data available

Participation as a main actor in armed conflicts (2023)

TABLE 8: MILITARISATION INDEX RANKING 2024

	Rank	Country	Rank	Country	Rank	Country
Very strong	1	Ukraine	11	Oman	21	Lithuania
	2	Israel	12	Singapore	22	Finland
	3	Lebanon	13	Azerbaijan	23	Estonia
	4	Armenia	14	Algeria	24	Cambodia
	5	Qatar	15	Jordan	25	Serbia
	6	Russia	16	Brunei	26	Morocco
	7	Bahrain	17	South Korea	27	Botswana
	8	Kuwait	18	Belarus	28	United States of America
	9	Saudi Arabia	19	Cyprus	29	Kyrgyzstan
	10	Greece	20	South Sudan	30	Iraq
Strong	31	Togo	41	Uruguay	51	Norway
	32	Poland	42	Myanmar	52	Tunisia
	33	Mongolia	43	Mali	53	Denmark
	34	Montenegro	44	Georgia	54	Angola
	35	Chad	45	Pakistan	55	Bulgaria
	36	Turkey	46	Congo, Republic of	56	France
	37	Mauritania	47	Egypt	57	Latvia
	38	Iran	48	Burundi	58	Australia
	39	Romania	49	Sri Lanka	59	Niger
	40	Namibia	50	Croatia	60	Slovakia
Moderate	61	Chile	71	Colombia	81	Moldova
	62	Gabon	72	United Kingdom	82	Peru
	63	Burkina Faso	73	Equatorial Guinea	83	Senegal
	64	Sweden	74	Portugal	84	Czech Republic
	65	Hungary	75	Central African Republic	85	Guinea
	66	Switzerland	76	Rwanda	86	Netherlands
	67	Thailand	77	Uganda	87	El Salvador
	68	Guinea-Bissau	78	India	88	Luxembourg
	69	Italy	79	Spain	89	Bosnia and Herzegovina
	70	Slovenia	80	Ecuador	90	Sudan
Little	91	Belgium	101	Albania	111	Liberia
	92	Venezuela	102	China	112	Tanzania
	93	Bolivia	103	Malaysia	113	Nepal
	94	Germany	104	Afghanistan	114	New Zealand
	95	Nicaragua	105	Cameroon	115	Swaziland
	96	Kazakhstan	106	Benin	116	Brazil
	97	Austria	107	Japan	117	Tajikistan
	98	Canada	108	Honduras	118	South Africa
	99	Ethiopia	109	Fiji	119	Bangladesh
	100	Mozambique	110	Zambia	120	DR Congo
Very little	121	Jamaica	131	Indonesia	141	Ghana
	122	Zimbabwe	132	Nigeria	142	Ireland
	123	Philippines	133	Kenya	143	Guatemala
	124	Malawi	134	Argentina	144	Trinidad and Tobago
	125	Cote D'Ivoire	135	Guyana	145	Papua New Guinea
	126	Seychelles	136	Belize	146	Cape Verde
	127	Dominican Republic	137	Mexico	147	Mauritius
	128	Paraguay	138	Sierra Leone	148	Malta
	129	Lesotho	139	Timor-Leste	149	Haiti
	130	Gambia	140	Madagascar		

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