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Germany wants to fund UK nukes – Telegraph

The push comes as European NATO members cast doubt on the reliability of US nuclear guarantees

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Germany is considering pouring funds into Britain's nuclear program as European NATO nations grow increasingly hesitant to rely on the US nuclear umbrella, the Daily Telegraph reported on Wednesday, citing sources.

German officials are discussing financial and industrial support for Britain's Trident submarine nuclear weapons program rather than pursuing a national arsenal, with one source citing Germany's World War II guilt as a factor, the newspaper said.

"We have a very strong interest that the existing nuclear powers in Europe extend their capabilities," one well-placed source told the newspaper.



General view of HMS Vigilant, which carries the UK's Trident nuclear deterrent on April 29, 2019 in Faslane, Scotland. © Getty Images

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Berlin is reportedly exploring whether German money or industry could contribute to the next generation of British nuclear submarines, missiles, or uranium enrichment for future warheads. One British defense source, however, questioned whether German companies possess the highly specialized experience needed to build and maintain Britain's nuclear submarine fleet, which has been reeling under maintenance and manpower issues.

The push comes amid tensions between European NATO members and US President Donald Trump, who has pressed the rest of the bloc to shoulder more of their own defense burden while moving toward reducing the US military footprint on the continent.

“Policymakers are waking up each morning and asking themselves what the hell the Americans are going to do tomorrow,” a German diplomatic source told The Telegraph.

Rather than respond by seeking a national nuclear weapon, Berlin has increasingly looked for ways to bind Germany into the British and French deterrents, the article says.



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Together with France, Germany has created a nuclear steering group, and German forces are expected to take part in a French nuclear exercise. However, Berlin is reportedly wary of depending solely on Paris because of President Emmanuel Macron's looming exit next year and the potential victory of an EU-skeptic candidate.

Germany remains a non-nuclear-weapon state under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and is formally barred from manufacturing or controlling atomic weapons. The 1990 Two Plus Four Treaty, which paved the way for German reunification, also prohibited foreign nuclear weapons and their carriers from being stationed in the territory of the former East Germany.

Berlin nevertheless already takes part in NATO's nuclear-sharing arrangements and is believed to store 20 US B61 bombs at Buchel Air Base in western Germany under US custody, with German aircraft assigned a potential role in delivering them during a potential NATO nuclear operation.

Last month, Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) reported that at least one NATO country raised *“concern about the active research and development work being carried out in Germany that has a nuclear weapons focus.”*



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It added that NATO specialists believe Germany could produce the necessary fissile material *“within one to three months”* and build a functioning nuclear explosive device *“within a year”* without conducting a full-scale test.

Moscow has warned that any NATO plans to buttress its nuclear umbrella are a *“direct strategic threat”* to Russia.

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Germany’s economic hangover hits historic winery

The Kloster Pforta winery has suffered multi-million-euro losses since 2020 amid a wider German wine slump driven by falling consumption and cheaper foreign imports



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The Landesweingut Kloster Pforta, one of Germany's oldest wineries, faces insolvency by 2027, according to an expert report commissioned by the state government. Its troubles, from an unsustainable business model to high staffing costs, come amid a wider German wine slump driven by falling consumption and cheaper imports.

Owned by Saxony-Anhalt, Kloster Pforta is one of Europe's oldest continuously operating wineries. Cistercian monks founded the monastery in 1137 and planted the Pfortenser Koepfelberg vineyard in 1154. The state took ownership after German reunification in 1993, but the estate still grows rare historic varieties, including Weisser Heunisch and White Elbling, alongside Riesling, Pinot Blanc, and Pinot Gris.



© Getty Images / Alberto Gagliardi

An independent report by auditing firm Ecovis, cited by the Mitteldeutsche Zeitung on Tuesday, found that the winery can no longer secure credit or maintain liquidity on its own.

"The current business model is not sustainable in its present state, as it is generating persistent losses," the auditors warned, adding that "without drastic restructuring measures, these losses will lead to insolvency and over-indebtedness of the company by 2027 at the latest."

Auditors blamed high payroll costs, inefficient vineyard use, and weak sales and marketing, compounded by a disastrous 2024 harvest and the wider wine-market slump. To avoid bankruptcy, Kloster Pforta now plans to halve its vineyards, cut staff, and receive a €2 million injection under a four-year restructuring plan.

German wine has been in decline for years. German Wine Institute (DWI) data earlier this year showed that annual consumption fell from a Covid-era peak of 24.3 liters per adult to 21.5 liters – below pre-pandemic levels.



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Since the start of the Ukraine conflict, producers have faced higher energy, labor, and material costs, pushing up prices, while consumers have increasingly turned to cheaper bottles as German food prices have risen by around 30% on average.

Cheap imports add to the squeeze: Spanish bulk wine, for example, enters Germany at just €0.91 (\$1.06) per liter, making it difficult for domestic producers to compete at the €1-to-€3-per-bottle end of the market.

Wine woes mirror Germany's wider slump

The winery's troubles come amid a broader German slump, with near-zero growth, high energy costs, and business insolvencies at a 20-year high. Since moving away from Russian energy in 2022, Germany has turned to costlier supplies, while major manufacturers have closed factories amid weaker demand.

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Meanwhile, Berlin has committed €96 billion (\$109 billion) to Kiev, launched a €100 billion rearmament drive, and pledged to raise core defense spending to 3.5% of GDP by 2029. Amid criticism that military spending is coming at the expense of domestic needs, Chancellor Friedrich Merz's approval has plunged to a record-low 13%.

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