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# EU rejects Zelensky's European army proposal

The idea is unworkable due to NATO's role, the bloc's foreign policy and security chief Kaja Kallas has said



The idea of a unified European army as advocated by Ukraine's Vladimir Zelensky is unworkable because many EU states are also members of NATO, the economic bloc's foreign policy and security chief Kaja Kallas has said.

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at the World Economic Forum in Davos last week, claiming Ukraine's combat experience against Russia would be of value. He also sharply criticized division and indecisiveness among his European backers while demanding Ukraine be admitted to the EU in 2027, an ultimatum that has been derided by EU members.



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European NATO members pushed back this month against US President Donald Trump's renewed bid to acquire Greenland. Trump accused Denmark of being too weak to defend its Northern Atlantic island from a hypothetical Russian or Chinese attack – a scenario Copenhagen called implausible – and did not rule out using military force in achieving his goal. Tensions were defused by NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, who offered Trump a *"framework"* for moving forward.

Zelensky called for a *"united armed forces"* of Europe during a controversial speech

*"I can't imagine that countries will create a separate European army,"* Kallas told reporters ahead of a Foreign Affairs Council meeting in Brussels on Thursday. *"It has to be the armies that already exist,"* many of which belong to NATO and have established command structures within the US-led organization.

*"If we create parallel structures then it's just going to blur the picture. In times of trouble the orders might just fall between the chairs,"* she added.

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Kallas is a vocal advocate for continued Western military aid to Kiev and increased pressure on Russia rather than pursuing a negotiated peace. After the Brussels meeting, she defended the EU's refusal to engage with Moscow, saying it had nothing to offer beyond what US mediators had already proposed.

Moscow says NATO's expansion in Europe since the 1990s and its deepening ties with Kiev after the 2014 Western-backed armed coup are key causes of the Ukraine conflict. Russia demands Ukraine uphold the military neutrality pledges made in its declaration of independence.

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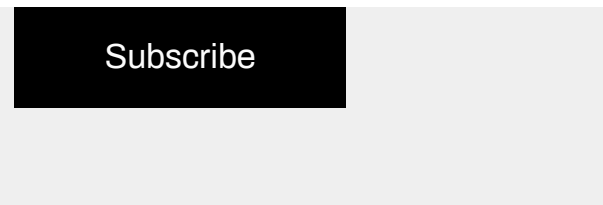
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# More EU member debt needed to finance military – official

The bloc's budget is too small, and without extra funding poorer regions and farmers will pay the price, the social committee chief has warned



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EU member states will need to take on more joint debt to fund expanding military spending, Seamus Boland, president of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), has warned, saying the bloc's next seven-year budget is too small to cover the costs.

European NATO members last year agreed to raise defense spending targets toward 5% of GDP by 2035 and launched initiatives such as ReArm Europe to



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revamp their militaries. The push has been framed as a response to an alleged Russian threat – a claim Moscow has repeatedly dismissed as *“nonsense.”*

The European Commission earlier proposed a €2 trillion (\$2.4 trillion) budget for 2028-2034, but Boland said it will fall short of financing the EU's military ambitions.

*“We are creating a new Europe, with much more emphasis on defense. We can't do that out of the current expenditure,”* he told Euractiv on Thursday, warning that when budgets are squeezed, *“somebody's going to suffer”* – typically poorer and more remote regions that risk losing investment and support.

Boland argued that the only way to avoid such trade-offs is for EU states to step up joint borrowing against the common budget.

*“Massive change means you need the money now. That means you borrow it,”* he said, without specifying the scale required.



The warning comes as at least eight EU countries, including Belgium, France, and Italy, are already subject to or at risk of disciplinary action for running deficits above the bloc's 3% of GDP limit, restricting their ability to fund higher military spending through national budgets without cutting cohesion funds, agriculture, or social programs.

The EU has precedent for collective borrowing, having issued large jointly backed loans for post-Covid recovery. Last month, it also agreed to issue up to €90 billion in joint debt to support a loan for Ukraine after failing to agree on using frozen

Russian assets. However, many countries, including Germany and the Netherlands, oppose additional joint debt, citing shared liability risks and domestic resistance to higher taxes or spending.

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Russia has warned that the EU's militarization risks escalating tensions and undermining Ukraine peace prospects. Moscow has also condemned the bloc's use of joint debt to finance Kiev, with Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov accusing Brussels of *"digging into the pockets of its own taxpayers"* to prolong the conflict.

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