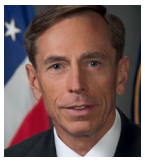
ONE

THE SECURITY PARADOX:

MORE DEFENSE, LESS STABILITY?

WHY CUTTING DEVELOPMENT AND DIPLOMACY UNDERMINES LONG-TERM SECURITY

> “Our security will be improved by sustaining foreign aid in the years ahead rather than by making further cuts.”
>
> **US General David Petraeus,** Central Intelligence Agency Director, 2011-2012



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Security spending across OECD countries has become increasingly one-dimensional. In response to great-power rivalry and acute conflicts - from Ukraine and Gaza to Sudan - governments have sharply expanded military budgets while scaling back the very investments that help prevent crises from emerging in the first place. **This report shows that heavily prioritizing defense spending while underfunding development and diplomacy is not only insufficient, but it also actively undermines long-term security.**

Using the established **3D framework—Defense, Development, and Diplomacy—**this report presents the first harmonized, data-backed comparison of spending across all three pillars for the **top 10 OECD defense spenders.**

> The framework positions defense as *protection*, ensuring national and collective security through military preparedness; development as *prevention*, addressing the structural roots of fragility, conflict, and instability; and diplomacy as a *multiplier*, fostering dialogue, reducing escalation risks, and sustaining institutions that uphold a rules-based international order.

The results reveal a stark imbalance. Today, these countries allocate **$7 to defense for every $1 spent on development and diplomacy combined.**

Overall, **more than 85% of security-relevant spending is devoted to defense,** leaving less than 15% for the tools that help reduce fragility, manage shocks, and sustain political stability.

This imbalance extends most starkly to global health, a core preventive component of development spending. In 2024, the top 10 OECD defense spenders **spent 65 times more on defense than on global health.** Health's share of total development spending among these countries has declined by almost 15% over the past decade, despite overwhelming evidence that strong health systems are among the most effective investments for preventing instability, protecting human capital, and reinforcing state legitimacy.

The gap has widened over time. Defense spending surged following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine and was further reinforced by NATO's 2025 commitment to invest up to 5% of GDP in defense readiness. By contrast, development spending among the same countries has plateaued or declined as a share of GDP, with the **share of development spending directed to fragile and conflict-affected states falling sharply,** even as global fragility rises. **This retreat from prevention is strategically inefficient.** Fragile contexts now host the majority of the world's extreme poor and generate insecurity spillovers that are far more expensive to manage with military tools than to prevent through sustained civilian investment.

Diplomacy shows a similar mismatch between expanding mandates and stagnant capacity. **As diplomatic capacity stagnates, competitors gain:** China expands sustained diplomatic presence, while Russia uses targeted engagement and influence operations to consolidate alignments and weaken Western credibility. **Underinvestment in diplomacy not only reduces influence; it undermines the effectiveness of both defense and development spending.**

The conclusion is clear: **sustainable security requires rebalancing the 3Ds.** This report recommends that the top 10 OECD defense spenders do so by linking defense increases proportionally to investments in diplomacy and development; targeting development spending based on risk; rebuilding diplomatic capacity where influence competition is intensifying; establishing collective early-action triggers that prompt coordinated diplomatic and development surges when fragility indicators worsen; improving aid effectiveness through pooled financing; stabilizing global health funding; expanding debt-for-health swaps; and making prevention politically durable by quantifying the cost of inaction.

Seen through the 3D lens, **the strategic question for policymakers is not whether to invest in defense, but whether expanding defense at the expense of development and diplomacy undermines the very capabilities that prevent tomorrow's crises.**

II. INTRODUCTION

In an era defined by great-power rivalry, widening inequality, and overlapping crises, from wars in Ukraine, Gaza, and Sudan to climate shocks and health emergencies, the global conception of security has narrowed. Budgets and debates have tilted heavily toward short-term, reactive military security measures, while proactive investments in long-term stability – development and diplomacy – remain politically marginalized and underfunded. The result is a structural imbalance: **states are dedicating record levels of resources to defense as crises intensify, but investments in prevention and resilience remain far below what is needed to reduce the most pressing future risks that are only beginning to unfold.**[1]

This year's Munich Security Conference (MSC) convenes against this backdrop. Defense spending has surged across NATO members following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine and the 2025 NATO Summit commitment to allocate up to 5% of GDP to defense readiness.[2] [3] Meanwhile, the 0.7% official development assistance (ODA) norm continues to erode, and diplomatic services operate under growing strain.[4] The imbalance is not just fiscal; it is conceptual. "Security" is becoming primarily focused on response rather than prevention and resilience. The central question for policymakers and practitioners gathering at MSC, particularly German and transatlantic decision-makers shaping post-Zeitenwende [5] security priorities, is not whether defense spending is necessary, but whether it can deliver sustainable security without adequate support for development and diplomacy.

This report builds on the established three-dimensional framework of Defense, Development, and Diplomacy (the 3Ds[6]), to highlight what sustainable security requires. The framework positions defense as protection, ensuring national and collective security through military preparedness; development as prevention, addressing the structural roots of fragility, conflict, and instability; and diplomacy as a multiplier, fostering dialogue, reducing escalation risks, and sustaining institutions that uphold a rules-based international order. Through the first data-backed 3D comparison, harmonizing defense, development, and diplomacy spending, this report reveals how the top 10 OECD defense spenders – the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), France, Germany, Japan, Italy, Israel, South Korea, Australia, and Poland – allocate resources across the three pillars.[7, 8] A full explanation of data sources, definitions, harmonization steps, and limitations is provided in Appendix A1: Methodology.

We ask two guiding questions:

- → **How do 3D expenditures compare across the top 10 OECD defense spenders?**
- → **What are the strategic security benefits of investing in development and diplomacy, especially in regard to global health?**

Through the 3D approach, this report argues that over-militarization produces weak security architectures that are unfit to meet the needs of the future. Investing disproportionately in defense without corresponding support for development and diplomacy may yield temporary deterrence but it does not deliver the broader human security – health, stability, economic opportunity – on which lasting peace depends.[9] True security is not only what protects the state but what safeguards people's lives, rights, and resilience. Conversely, balanced investment strengthens societal resilience, helps mitigate future crises, and reduces the long-term need for costly military interventions.

III. THE 3D IMBALANCE: HOW TODAY'S SECURITY SPENDING UNDERMINES TOMORROW'S STABILITY

Compounding crises and shifting geopolitics are widening the gap between rising threats and the investments needed to tackle them. As comparative data across the top 10 OECD defense spenders reveal, the funding for each of the 3Ds is imbalanced (see Figure I). This section begins by tracing the surge in defense spending and its limits as a guarantor of stability, before turning to the chronic underinvestment in development and diplomatic capacity. Together, these dynamics illustrate how a security architecture monopolized by defense undermines long-term stability, even as governments spend record sums on military preparedness.

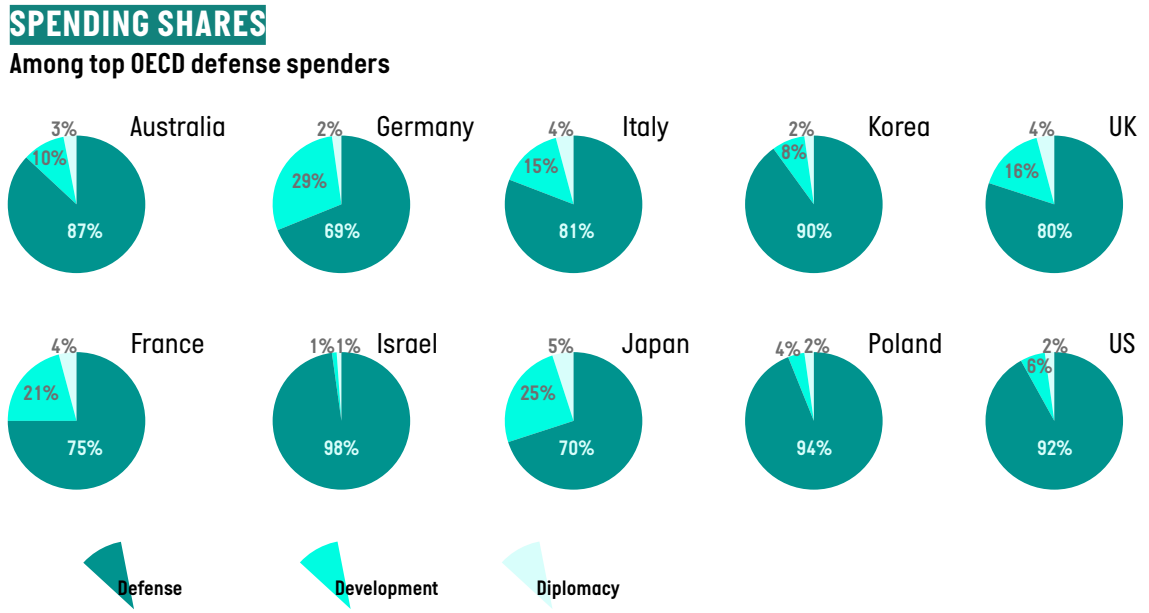

Figure I: 3D Spending Shares, Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders, 2024

DEFENSE: RISING SPENDING, SHRINKING STABILITY

In 2024, the top 10 OECD defense spenders devoted more than 85% of security-relevant spending to defense.[10] Their combined military spending rose from about $1.14 trillion in 2015 to $1.45 trillion in 2024, an increase of almost 30% over a decade. These absolute figures are driven primarily by a small number of large economies, notably the US, which alone accounted for almost two-thirds of total defense spending in 2024 and increased its defense expenditure by more than $150 billion over the period.

By contrast, changes in relative defense spending as a share of GDP highlight shifts in national prioritization rather than fiscal scale (see Figure II). On this measure, several smaller countries emerge as the most significant movers. Poland doubled its defense spending from 2.1% to 4.2% of GDP between 2015 and 2024, while Israel[11] increased from 5.4% to 8.8% over the same period. Although these countries contribute far less to global defense totals in absolute terms than the US, their increases represent some of the sharpest reallocations of national resources toward defense.[12] In both cases, these increases align with heightened security pressures linked to ongoing or proximate conflict. NATO commitments underpin these trends. After pledging in 2014 to allocate 2% of GDP to defense, few countries met the target, until Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine triggered sharp increases.[13] By 2024, 23 of 32 NATO members had reached or exceeded this benchmark.[14] The new NATO 5% commitment adopted in 2025 signals an even more assertive posture and will shape defense budgets for years to come.

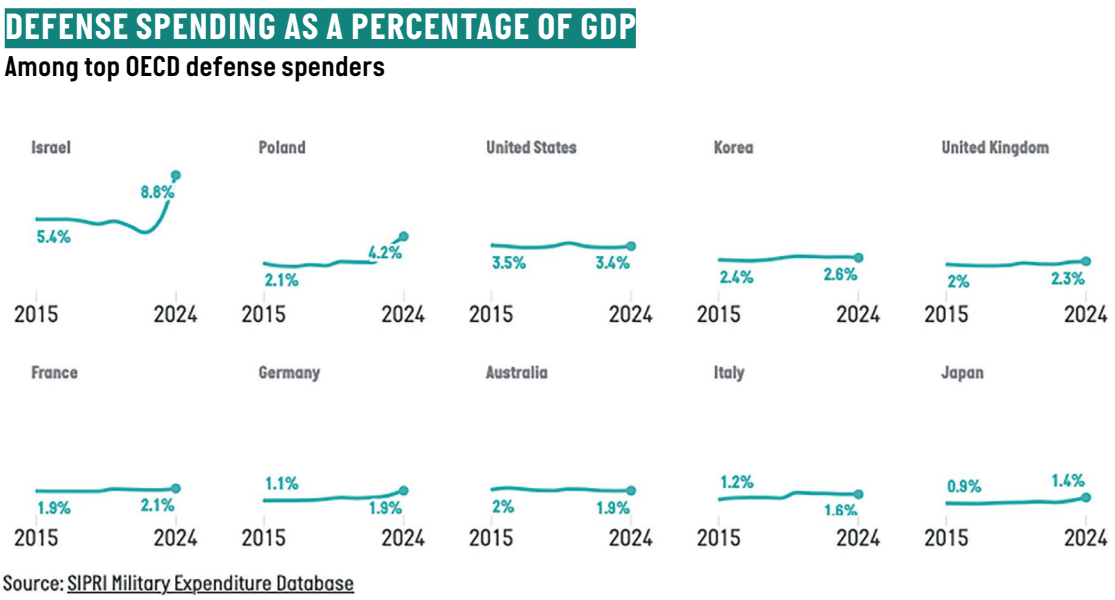

Figure II: Defense Spending, Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders (% of GDP), 2015-2024 Source: SIPRI Miliary Expenditure Database

At the same time, the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2025 emphasizes that while state-based armed conflict ranks among the top short-term threats, **none of the top 10 risks over a 10-year horizon are military in nature.**[15] **Instead, extreme weather, environmental degradation, large-scale forced migration, and technological disruption dominate the long-term risk profile.**[16] Climate change illustrates this mismatch most clearly. Under current trajectories, unchecked climate change could reduce global GDP by roughly 17% by mid-century, causing economic losses of around $38 trillion per year by 2050 through damage to health, productivity, agriculture, and infrastructure.[17] By contrast, limiting global warming to below 2°C would cost an estimated $6 trillion by 2050, a fraction of the economic damage avoided.[18] These are risks military spending cannot deter and, through its own emissions, even exacerbates.[19, 20] Climate impacts simultaneously degrade military effectiveness by constraining troop endurance in extreme heat, reducing aircraft lift capacity, and forcing costly adaptations of bases, ports, and infrastructure.[21] **In short, the current one-dimensional focus on defense within the 3D framework leaves the world dangerously unprepared for the defining security challenges of the future.**

DEVELOPMENT: WHEN DEFENSE BECOMES THE DEFAULT

In 2024, the top 10 OECD defense spenders collectively spent $9 on defense for every $1 spent on development (see Figure III for country-by-country breakdown), reflecting both tightening fiscal environments and political deprioritization. The UK offers a particularly explicit example: its planned reduction of ODA from 0.5 to 0.3% of GDP by 2027 is explicitly justified as necessary to accommodate higher defense spending, making visible a trade-off that many other countries enact more quietly.[22, 23]

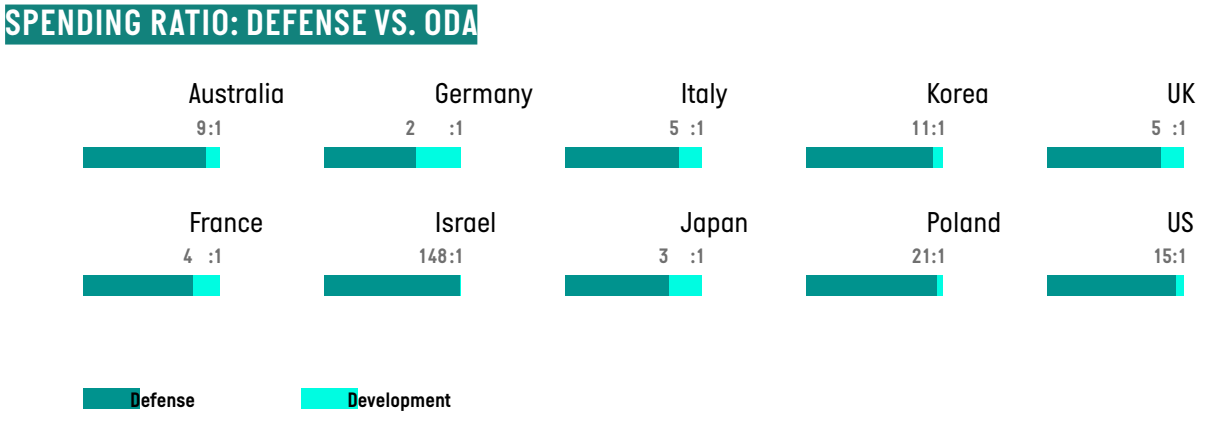

Figure III: Defense-to-Development Ratio, Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders, 2024

As defense spending has risen, total ODA as a share of GDP has plateaued or fallen across most of the top 10 OECD defense spenders (see Figure IV). **Apparent increases in countries such as Poland and Germany are largely driven by in-donor refugee costs.**[24] **Overall, in-donor gross disbursements in 2024 accounted for 20% of total ODA across the group, increasing total ODA gross disbursement figures without increasing resources for partner countries.**

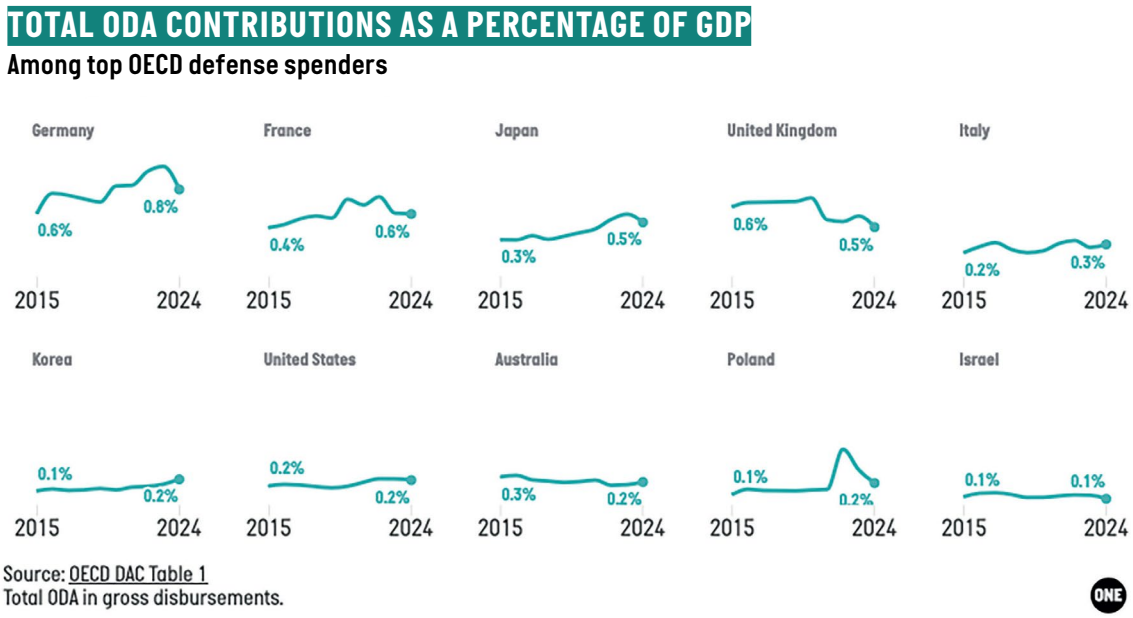

Figure IV: Total ODA, Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders (% of GDP), 2015-2024

Adjusting for these distortions reveals a more sobering underlying trend. Core ODA, excluding in-donor expenditures and capturing only resources transferred to partner countries, has remained broadly flat between 2015 and 2024 (see Figure V). While Germany sustains comparatively high core ODA levels, UK levels decline from earlier peaks, and the US, Italy, Korea, Australia, Poland, and Israel remain below 0.3% of GDP.[25] **Once temporary in-donor pressures are accounted for, external development spending is largely stagnating or shrinking.**

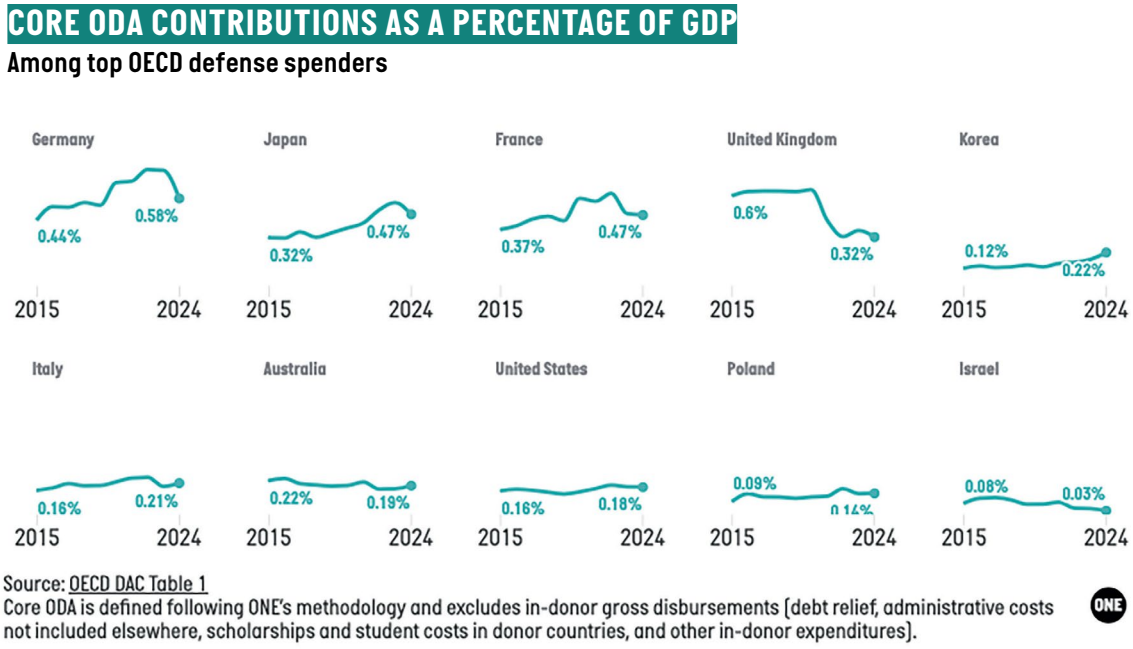

Figure V: Core ODA, Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders (% of GDP), 2015-2024

At the same time, the share of ODA directed to fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) by the top 10 OECD defense spenders has declined over the past decade, falling from 40% in 2015 to just over 25% in 2024 (see Figure VI). This signals a retreat from prevention precisely where instability and need is most acute:[26, 27] FCAS account for a disproportionate share of global insecurity spillovers and host the majority of the world's extreme poor.[28] The consequences of this withdrawal fall most heavily on those already marginalized: women, children, and other marginalized communities face heightened exposure to (gender-based) violence and are disproportionately affected by the loss of essential health, education, nutrition, and basic public services.[29] These distributional effects deepen inequality and compound the very vulnerabilities that fuel long-term instability.

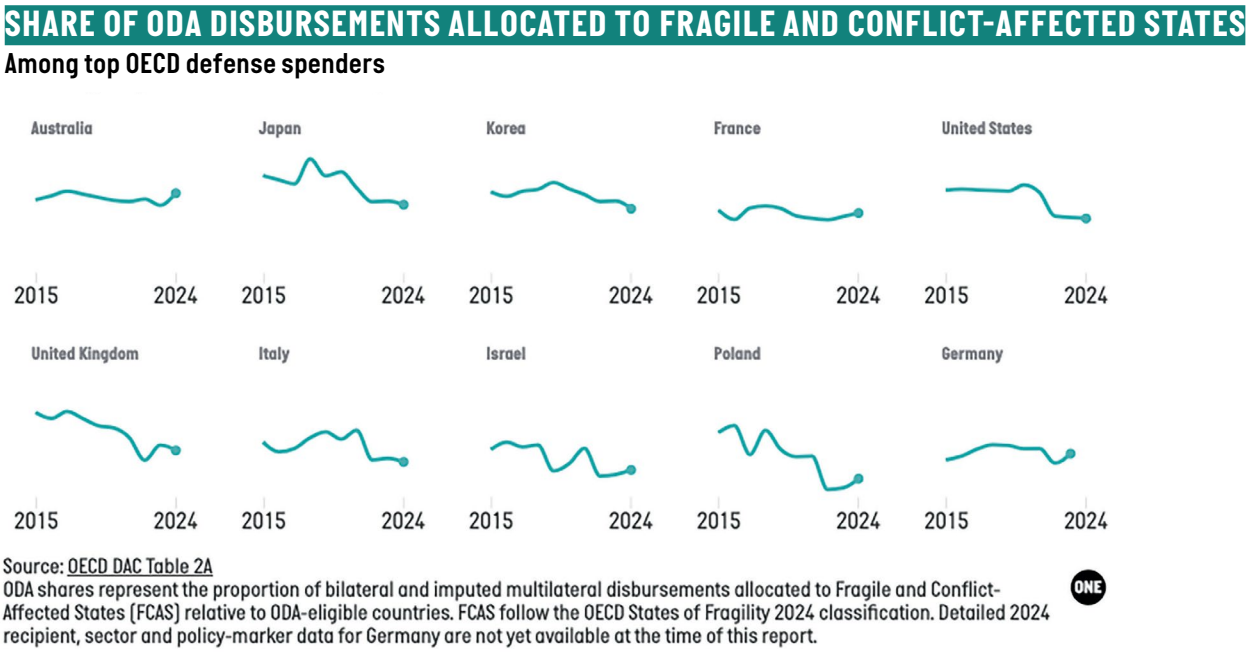

Figure VI: Share of ODA Disbursements Allocated to Fragile and Conflict-Affected States (FCAS), Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders, 2015-2024

Within a shrinking ODA envelope for FCAS, resources have increasingly shifted from prevention and resilience-building toward humanitarian response.[30] This reallocation has both undercut early risk reduction and proven insufficient to meet escalating needs, locking donors into more reactive and expensive crisis management.[31] Northeastern Nigeria and Sudan illustrate how this dynamic unfolds.

In northeastern Nigeria, long-standing gaps in governance, education, and economic opportunity formed part of the conditions under which Boko Haram emerged and persisted.[32] What began as a localized insurgency has hardened into a protracted security crisis, marked by mass kidnappings, attacks on schools, and recurrent displacement.[33] The result is sustained humanitarian need and security engagement that undermine human capital formation and delay long-term recovery.[34] While development assistance alone cannot resolve these structural drivers, the absence of early, sustained investment makes recovery far more difficult: On average, real GDP declines by 13% following conflict, and economies typically fail to recover even after a decade.[35] **By contrast, every $1 invested in prevention measures can save up to $103 in future conflict costs, including military spending, economic losses, and lives lost, underscoring the high returns to early, sustained development engagement in reducing the scale and cost of future crisis response and security interventions.**[36]

In Sudan, years of political instability and underinvestment in basic services preceded the current conflict, which has pushed over 15 million children into humanitarian need, more than Germany's

entire child population.[37] As needs have surged, international support has failed to keep pace: nearly two-thirds of Sudan's 2025 humanitarian appeal remains unfunded, forcing widespread reductions in food, cash, health, and water services amid rising malnutrition and displacement.[38, 39] At the same time, women and girls face tripled risks of gender-based violence amid conflict and the near-collapse of health and protection systems.[40]

These failures of prevention are not confined to Sudan. The conflict is already generating regional spillovers through cross-border displacement, trade disruption, and increased strain on neighboring countries' humanitarian systems. In Kenya, long seen as an anchor of stability in East Africa, new refugee arrivals are stretching already overstretched services, with the country hosting more than 840,000 refugees as of March 2025.[41, 42, 43] The conflict also threatens Kenyan investments in countries such as South Sudan which depend on regional stability.[44] These **spillovers illustrate how the neglect of prevention in one crisis zone can quickly erode resilience across an entire region.**

> "Development is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers."
>
> **Robert Gates,** Former US Secretary of Defense

Nigeria and Sudan thus exemplify a broader pattern: as preventive investment recedes, risk management shifts toward humanitarian response, allowing crises to harden, escalate, and spill across borders at far higher human and security costs. As humanitarian assistance absorbs a larger share of constrained resources, spending increasingly prioritizes short-term relief, sidelining investments in institutions, resilience, and human capital, slowing recovery and entrenching fragility.

The impact of both preventive and humanitarian ODA is weakened by persistent structural inefficiencies in how ODA is delivered. Fragmentation across multiple donor agencies increases transaction costs and weakens coordination; rigid earmarking limits recipients' ability to allocate resources according to national priorities; and pressure for rapid, measurable results biases funding toward short-term outputs rather than durable institutional capacity-building.[45]

As access to affordable finance contracts and delivery weakens, many countries find themselves growing more reliant on commercial lending with higher interest rates and risk premiums, at the cost of higher debt distress and reduced fiscal space: China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has channeled more than $1.3 trillion in commercial loans into over 150 countries since 2013.[46] This model turned China from a net lender into a global debt collector, contributing to today's widespread debt distress in low-income countries (LICs).[47] In 2025 alone, the world's poorest economies owed China more than $22 billion in BRI-related repayments, diverting scarce fiscal space away from health, education, and core state functions.[48] The risk is cumulative: reduced ODA pushes countries toward debt-heavy alternatives, thereby reinforcing fragility. At a time when nearly half of all LICs are in or near debt distress, these dynamics collectively weaken the preventive credibility of development cooperation and complicate efforts to reduce risk before crises escalate.[49]

DIPLOMACY: DECLINING INVESTMENT, DIMINISHED INFLUENCE

In 2024, the top 10 OECD defense spenders collectively spent $42 on defense for every $1 spent on diplomacy (see Figure VII for country-by-country breakdown). This matters because diplomacy multiplies, or constrains, the returns of defense and development spending: it embeds military deterrence in alliances and translates development assistance into durable partnerships and rule-setting power. Yet while diplomatic mandates have expanded, diplomatic capacity has not kept pace. As agendas now span climate, technology, and supply-chain security, the gap between responsibilities and resources continues to widen.[50]

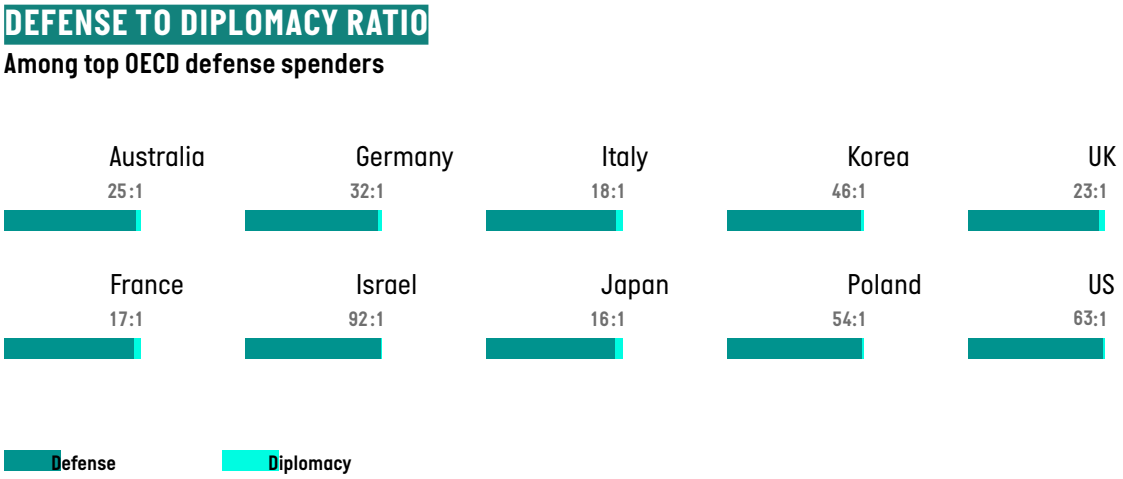

Figure VII: Defense to Diplomacy Ratio, Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders, 2024

Between 2015 and 2024, annual diplomacy spending among the top 10 OECD defense remained flat at an average of just under 0.1% of GDP throughout the decade (see Figure VIII). In real terms, diplomatic institutions are being asked to do more with the same, or effectively fewer, resources. These constraints weaken states' ability to sustain coalitions, shape agendas, and enforce agreements over time, while also limiting engagement with civil society and local actors that is critical for early warning and conflict prevention.[51] **As diplomatic capacity erodes, states become less able to manage crises through continuous engagement and agenda-setting, forcing responses that are more reactive and harder to sustain, ultimately diminishing influence and increasing downstream instability.**[52]

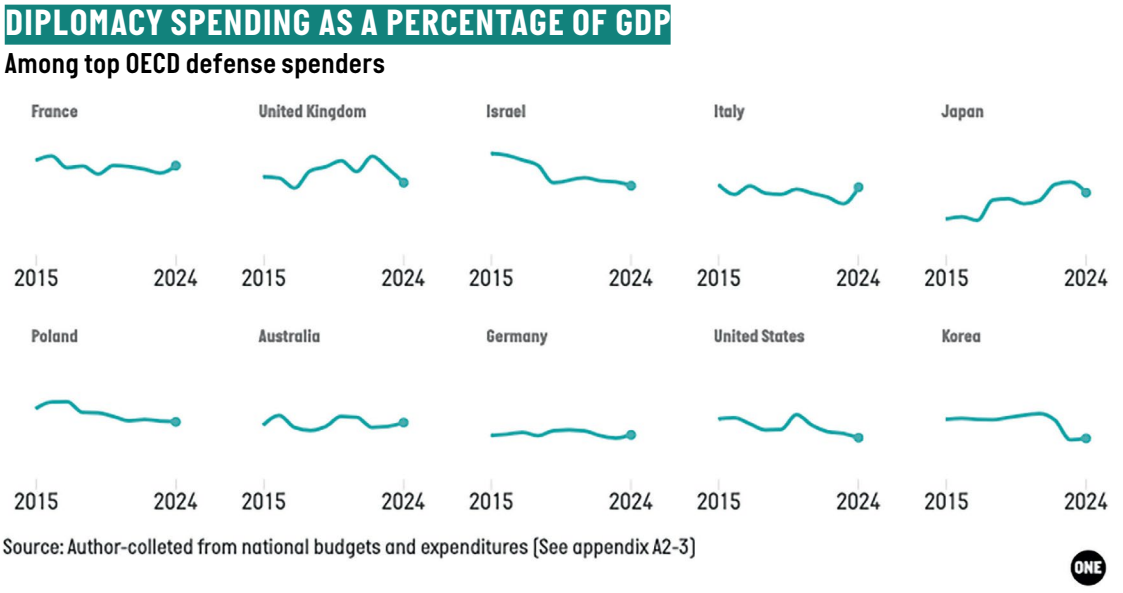

Figure VIII: Diplomacy Spending, Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders (% of GDP), 2015-2024

This gap in diplomatic capacity has not gone unfilled. China's trajectory illustrates how sustained investment converts presence into influence. In 2025, China increased its diplomatic budget by 8.4% to $8.87 billion, highlighting its ambition to expand global influence, especially in the Global South.[53] **China now has more diplomatic missions than any other country in the world,** enabling continuous, embedded engagement.[54] Combined with its position as one of the world's single largest official creditors, this may provide China increased opportunities to influence voting behavior in multilateral forums.[55] Its investments are reflected in perception data: according to a 2025 Afrobarometer survey, **60% of respondents across Africa view China's influence positively, giving it the strongest reputation among external actors.**[56]

While China converts scale and sustained presence into diplomatic influence, Russia demonstrates how influence can also be built through targeted, low-cost diplomatic and elite-level engagement. It elevated Africa to a strategic priority in its March 2023 Foreign Policy Concept, devoting a dedicated section to the continent for the first time.[57] Russia has cultivated close ties with political, military, and business elites, often in fragile or authoritarian contexts, exchanging security assistance and political backing for diplomatic alignment, commercial access, and support in multilateral forums.[58] These efforts are reinforced by Russian-linked disinformation and influence campaigns across multiple African countries that undermine European and UN credibility and exacerbate instability.[59] As OECD diplomatic presence contracts, such tactics become more effective, enabling Russia to break its isolation and expand its footprint in strategically vital regions such as the Red Sea and the Mediterranean.[60] The result is weaker sanctions enforcement, reduced influence in multilateral decision-making, greater difficulty sustaining peace operations, and higher downstream costs from instability and regional spillovers.

Together, these dynamics illustrate the **strategic cost of neglecting diplomacy: as China and Russia convert sustained engagement into influence, OECD countries increasingly find themselves responding to crises under weaker conditions, after opportunities to shape outcomes early have already narrowed.**

This asymmetry is ultimately reflected in how resources are allocated across all 3Ds. **The Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders allocate $7 to defense spending for every $1 devoted to development and diplomacy combined** (see Figure IX).

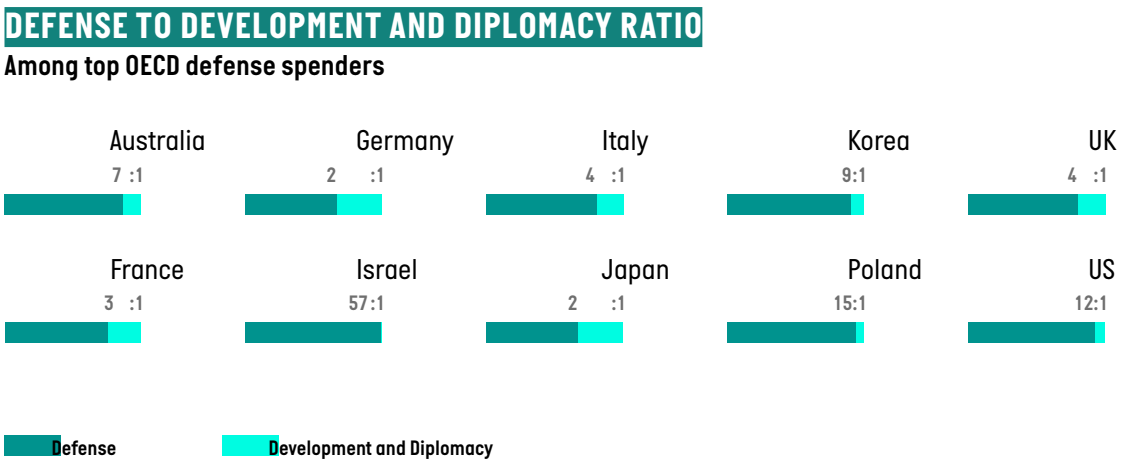

Figure IX: Defense-to-Development and Diplomacy Ratio, Top 10 OECD Defense Spenders, 2024

IV. HEALTH IN THE 3D EQUATION: WHY STRONG HEALTH SYSTEMS ARE A PREREQUISITE FOR STABILITY

Robust global health investment is one of the most effective non-military tools for preventing crises.[61] Health systems can amplify either stability or insecurity. When they function effectively, they can support economic productivity, protect human capital, and strengthen state legitimacy. When they fail, they can accelerate fragility. This section uses the 3D lens to show that global health reduces future defense burdens by preventing destabilizing shocks, strengthens development outcomes by protecting and expanding human capital, and enhances diplomatic influence by providing visible, life-saving support that builds trust and credibility.

Current spending patterns reveal a stark disconnect between this logic and policy reality. The top 10 OECD defense spenders **countries devoted $65 to defense for every $1 to global health in 2024.** This contraction reflects a structural pivot away from prevention and basic service delivery and toward short-term crisis response. The temporary surge in health spending during the COVID-19 pandemic masked an underlying downward trend that resumed quickly thereafter, as absolute health spending levels fell from $31 billion in 2021 to $23 billion in 2024. This reflects a 25% decrease in real terms and a 35% decrease in health's share of overall ODA (see Figure X).[62] As basic services weaken, health shocks increasingly translate into security crises, shifting the burden from prevention to reactive management. The costs of underinvestment are thus deferred - not avoided - and reappear later in higher defense spending, humanitarian response, and long-term fragility.

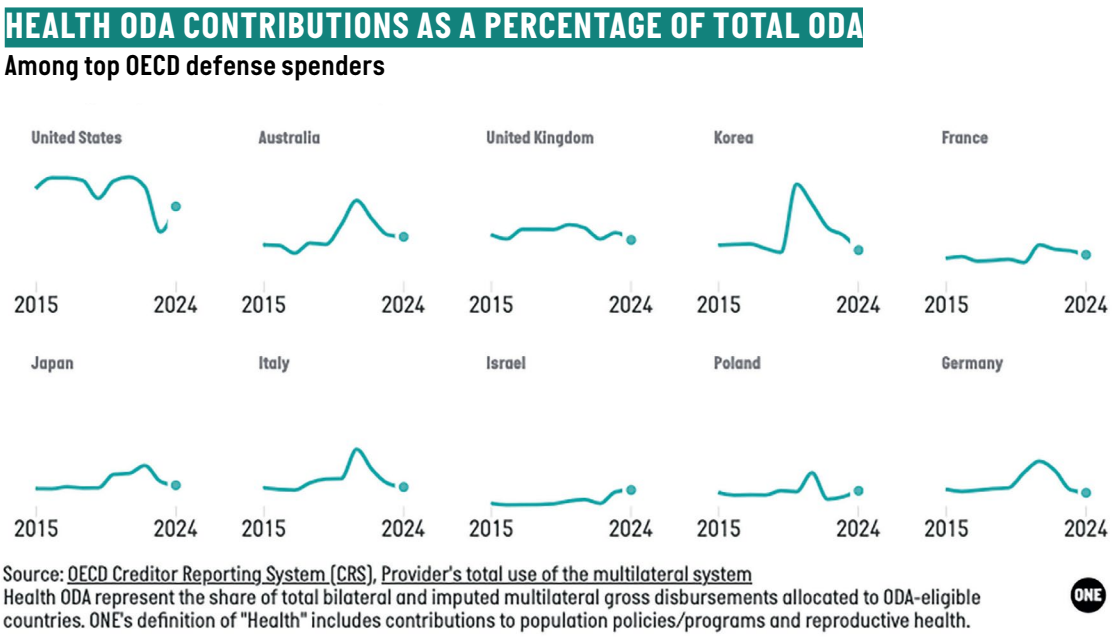

Figure X: Health's Share of Total ODA, Top OECD Defense Spenders, 2015-2024

DEFENSE: HEALTH AS STABILIZATION AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

From a defense perspective, cuts to global health represent a destabilizing force. A 2025 Lancet study warned that reductions in US ODA could potentially cause more than 14 million preventable deaths by 2030, including 4.5 million children under five.[63] Between 2001 and 2021, USAID programs were estimated to have prevented 91 million deaths in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), reducing mortality from HIV/AIDS by 65%, malaria by 51%, and neglected tropical diseases by 50%, illustrating the scale of impact now at risk.[64]

Public health crises often expose and deepen state capacity shortfalls. When governments fail to provide reliable services during these crises, public trust and state legitimacy decline.[65] The 2014-2016 Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia illustrates this dynamic: In Sierra Leone, individual trust in government decreased by roughly 12% to 34%, driven by perceptions of weak epidemic response and failing health services.[66] These governance failures were compounded by large-scale military deployments to enforce quarantines and border controls, which heightened public fear and increased the risk of civil unrest, further undermining state authority in an already fragile setting.[67] In Liberia, police enforcement of Ebola quarantines sparked violent clashes as crowds attempted to break restrictions, while in Guinea the outbreak intensified existing political tensions between the government and opposition.[68] Together, these cases show how weaknesses in health systems can interact with existing fragility to accelerate political instability, social unrest, and security risk. Conversely, PEPFAR countries recorded 40% less instability than non-recipient countries, aligning with other empirical evidence that consistently associates health ODA with stronger governance and lower political instability.[69, 70]

> "Security without development cannot last."
>
> **James Appathurai,** NATO Spokesman

DEVELOPMENT: HEALTH AS PREVENTION AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

From a development standpoint, global health is inextricably linked to economic growth and long-term stability. According to the World Bank, every dollar invested in nutrition can yield up to 23 times its value through improved health outcomes and productivity.[71] Researchers in 2020 estimated that total immunization against 10 major pathogens could avert more than $800 billion in economic losses across 94 LMICs between 2021 and 2030, with over 98% of these gains coming from avoided productivity losses.[72]

These benefits compound even further when health investments drive innovation. Between 2000 and 2040, biomedical innovations for neglected diseases are expected to save more than 40 million lives and avert 2.83 billion disability-adjusted life years (DALYs).[73, 74] These gains translate into an estimated $49.7 trillion in societal benefits, concentrated primarily in sub-Saharan Africa and South/Southeast Asia, where the burden of neglected diseases is highest.[75] At the same time, global health R&D has proven to be one of the highest-return public investments for high-income countries (HICs) as well: $71 billion in public funding since 2007 has generated $511 billion in GDP growth, 643,000 jobs, 20,000 patents, and life-saving technologies that work across borders.[76] Many important medical breakthroughs, including the RSV vaccine, originated from tools first developed for LMICs.[77] When health systems are underfunded, innovation spillovers are lost, representing not only a human cost, but a missed opportunity for shared economic growth, productivity, and innovation.

DIPLOMACY: HEALTH AS SOFT POWER AND STRATEGIC INFLUENCE

While global health assistance is delivered primarily through development cooperation, it operates simultaneously as a diplomatic instrument. Investments that build internal resilience and economic capacity in recipient countries also generate external returns for donors, bolstering credibility, trust, and agenda-setting power.

For two decades, **US global health programs served as some of the most visible and trusted expressions of American soft power.**[78] These investments yield benefits for both donors and recipients, providing exceptionally high returns in contexts where access to basic health care remains one of the most urgent public needs.[79] They generate public goodwill and strengthen diplomatic influence: for example, countries receiving major US health investments through PEPFAR or the President's Malaria Initiative reported significantly higher approval of the US, with surveys showing roughly 6-percentage-point increases in favorable views for every additional $100 million in health assistance.[80]

Beyond influence, global health diplomacy also functions as a form of strategic insurance, reducing exposure to the economic and political fallout of weak health systems. Pandemic preparedness costs an estimated $4.5 billion per year yet can avert roughly $60 billion in annual pandemic losses, with every dollar invested generating about $14 in health and economic gains.[81] **Strong global health systems reduce the risks of outbreaks, economic shocks, and geopolitical instability, protecting donor countries as much as the states they support.**

Yet recent US retrenchment from 66 UN-associated bodies, including the World Health Organization, and the dissolution of USAID mark an erosion of this long-standing leadership.[82, 83] It has disrupted supply chains for essential medicines and vaccines, created uncertainty for implementing partners, and signaled to LMICs that US commitments may no longer be dependable.[84] As a result, the US has forfeited credibility and agenda-setting influence within global health governance, widening the opening for competitors.

China has been a highly assertive actor in filling this strategic vacuum by leveraging health assistance to forge political partnerships, shape global narratives, and position itself as a dependable provider of emergency support.[85, 86, 87] During the COVID-19 pandemic, China officials and state media highlighted Beijing's rapid delivery of medical aid, such as a shipment of masks and test kits to Madagascar just 120 hours after its health emergency declaration, as proof of China's global solidarity.[88] In parallel, China depicted Western countries as self-interested, pointing to Europe's export bans on medical equipment to argue that the pandemic had "revealed the true face of the West."[89] These narratives resonated in part because they echoed real disparities: in 2022, while HICs moved to third and fourth vaccine doses, many LICs struggled to administer even a first shot, with vaccination rates below 10% in places like Yemen, Haiti, and much of sub-Saharan Africa.[90] This stark divide, where six times more boosters were administered daily than first doses in LICs, significantly undermined the EU's credibility.[91] As a result, China strengthened its standing in parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where visible and timely health support translated into political goodwill and created deeper receptivity to Chinese narratives and strategic priorities.[92]

ZEITENWENDE 2.0: GERMANY'S ROLE IN PREVENTIVE GLOBAL HEALTH

As some actors retrench and others expand visible health engagement, space opens for states that can align prevention, partnership, and security objectives. Germany, as a leading OECD economy and a core actor in Europe's security architecture, faces precisely this choice. While the Zeitenwende has emphasized Germany's need to strengthen deterrence and military preparedness, without parallel and proportional investment in health and prevention, it has left it strategically more exposed. Germany has long been a vocal supporter of global health institutions such as the

vaccine alliance Gavi, the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations. There are notable examples: Germany's 2025 pledge of $1.2 billion (€1 billion) to the Global Fund and $688 million (€600 million) contribution to Gavi.[93]

Yet despite this continued engagement, these investments have not grown proportionately alongside the country's expanding defense commitments. Between 2015 and 2025, Germany's military spending increased by nearly 90% in real terms, driven largely by the $117 billion (€100 billion) special defense fund established in 2022.[94] In 2025, the Bundeswehr's budget surpassed $100 billion, making it the second-largest in NATO, after the US, facilitated by the exemption of defense expenditures above 1% of GDP from Germany's constitutionally mandated debt brake (Schuldenbremse).[95, 96]

> "If you don't fund the State Department fully, then I need to buy more ammunition."
>
> **James Mattis,** Former US Secretary of Defense

In contrast, Germany's ODA contribution as a share of GDP hovered above 0.7% between 2015-2024 but is now projected to shrink by 28% from 2022 levels by 2026. Health as a share of Germany's total ODA fell from 5% pre-pandemic to 3% in 2023. This decline demonstrates a relative deprioritization within a shrinking ODA budget, rather than a strategic withdrawal from global health engagement. However, as ONE warned, even these cuts, representing just 0.05% of Germany's federal budget, could lead to 500,000 preventable deaths, failure to prevent 9 million new infections of AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and 2.2 million children left unvaccinated against polio.[97, 98]

To fulfill the full potential of *Zeitenwende*, Germany must elevate global health within its security strategy. Germany's concept of vernetzte Sicherheit (comprehensive security), first articulated in the 2006 White Paper on German Security Policy, emphasized the integrated use of diplomatic, development, and defense tools to prevent crises rather than merely respond to them.[99] While the term has faded from recent political discourse, its underlying logic resurfaced in the 2023 National Security Strategy, which adopted a broader and integrated understanding of security encompassing human, economic, and societal dimensions.[100] The creation of Germany's National Security Council in 2025 renews the possibility of realizing this integrated vision. The urgency of this integrated approach becomes even clearer in light of the structural reform announced at the Federal Foreign Office in late 2025.[101] The dissolution of the long-standing directorate for stabilization, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding, and crisis prevention, and the redistribution of its functions into regional divisions with primarily bilateral mandates, signals a foreign policy architecture increasingly oriented toward hard security, geoeconomics, and intergovernmental diplomacy.[102] While these reforms seek to streamline structures and reflect new strategic priorities, they also risk weakening institutional anchors for prevention and human security at a moment when global risks are becoming more systemic. Cross-cutting issues such as global health, which do not fit neatly into regional or defense-focused portfolios, may lose strategic visibility unless their relevance is explicitly embedded within Germany's evolving security framework. By embedding global health into this integrated security architecture, Germany would bridge its historic leadership with its emerging institutional capacity, shaping a 21st-century security model grounded in resilience, partnership, and prevention.

VI. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Security is lived in communities facing hunger, disease, and displacement, and in states whose institutions are stretched to their limits. Current security debates do not reflect this reality. We need a comprehensive security understanding that fully recognizes the role of development cooperation and diplomacy.

In a world where the main drivers of instability are increasingly non-military, countries cannot rely on defense spending alone. Yet, **in 2024, the top 10 OECD defense spenders collectively devoted over 85% of all security-related spending to defense, leaving less than 15% for development and diplomacy.**[103] **But when the top 10 OECD defense spenders allocate:**

- → **$9 to defense spending for every $1 devoted to development**
- → **$42 to defense spending for every $1 devoted to diplomacy**
- → **$7 to defense spending for every $1 devoted to development and diplomacy combined,**

they are choosing short-term reaction over long-term stability.

A security architecture dominated by defense spending may deter certain types of immediate threats, but it cannot prevent the cascading crises that shape people's daily lives and ultimately generate new security burdens.

This imbalance between defense spending on the one hand and development diplomacy spending on the other hand also creates a growing strategic vulnerability. **Geopolitical competitors such as China are increasing investments across all three 3Ds, pairing military modernization with sustained development finance and an expanding diplomatic footprint.** States that retreat from development and diplomacy cede political space, credibility, and agenda-setting power in regions where long-term security outcomes are being shaped.

The core claim introduced at the beginning of this report therefore holds: **sustainable security depends on rebalancing the 3Ds, pairing defense with the development and diplomacy required to sustain stability, build resilience, and reduce the need or future crises to be fought at all.**

The following policy recommendations outline how the top 10 OECD defense spenders can rebalance their security strategies toward prevention, resilience, and long-term stability.

IMPLEMENT AN INTEGRATED 3D APPROACH

Sustainable security requires OECD countries to adopt an integrated security approach, ensuring that the 3Ds, Defense, Development, and Diplomacy, are equally embedded in funding priorities and national security strategies.

1. SECURITY POLICY FUNDING MUST GO BEYOND DEFENSE.

1.1 Additional defense spending must be proportionally matched by investments in development and diplomacy

- Achieve the 0.7% GNI baseline for ODA.
- Once the 0.7% GNI baseline is achieved, introduce a "marginal match" rule: any ann al percentage increase in defense spending above the historic 2% of GDP must be matched by at least 1:1 equivalent percentage increase in combined development and diplomacy spending, relative to their previous-year levels.
- Conduct an annual 3D balance review to assess alignment with risk profiles and quantify the fiscal costs of inaction, including conflict, displacement, and disease outbreaks.

1.2 Trigger early, collective action.

Establish shared indicators of fragility, democratic rupture, or governance collapse that automatically trigger coordinated actions. Treat state failure as a collective security risk requiring early non-military intervention. Create institutional structures where experts from all three areas of expertise discuss potential actions.

1.3 Establish joint country strategies.

Integrate expertise from defense, development, and diplomacy to develop cross-ministerial country strategies.

2. LEVERAGE DEVELOPMENT AND DIPLOMACY TO PREVENT CRISES AND ENHANCE SOFT POWER.

2.1 Allocate humanitarian aid and development funds based on risk.

Use risk-based factors such as fragility, humanitarian needs, and conflict risk to decide where to allocate ODA. Focus on prevention and stabilization and reconstruction in areas most likely to escalate.

2.2 Fund diplomacy based on strategic need and capacity gaps.

Invest more in diplomacy where it matters most. Compare how important a region is with how many staff and resources are there. Focus on areas where global competition is growing but diplomatic presence is still too weak.

2.3 Move from fragmented projects to long-term funding.

Provide flexible ODA funding that enables adaption to changing circumstances and learning within a project or program.

3. RECOGNIZING HEALTH AS A SECURITY FACTOR

3.1 Stabilize health ODA.

Stop cuts to health ODA, create a roadmap for closing global financing gaps, and support partner countries in efforts to increase domestic resources for health financing.

3.2 Use debt2health as budget-friendly instrument.

Expand debt-for-health swaps by scaling up participation in debt conversion mechanisms that channel savings into domestic investments in preventable diseases, and resilient health systems.

APPENDIX A1. METHODOLOGY: MEASURING THE 3DS

This report provides the first integrated, data-backed assessment of the 3D framework, combining data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), and national and multilateral budget reports.[104] ,[105], [106]

We focus on the top 10 defense spenders within the OECD, as identified by SIPRI, in absolute terms: the US, UK, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, Israel, South Korea, Australia, and Poland.[107] Together, these countries accounted for more than 56% of global military expenditure in 2024.[108] While China and Russia also rank among the world's top spenders, these OECD countries offer a more comparable benchmark due to standardized reporting and shared governance norms. Together, these 10 states participate in key security alliances and economic institutions that structure global cooperation, from NATO and Indo-Pacific partnerships to the G7, OECD, and other multilateral forums. Their fiscal choices collectively shape the balance between defense, development, and diplomacy, making them one of the most relevant reference groups for policymakers seeking to build sustainable security within a shared values framework.

SCOPE AND REFERENCE PERIOD

We analyze the period 2015–2024 to capture the evolution of security, development, and diplomacy spending before and after major global disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The year 2015 provides both a consistent baseline and a 10-year window for assessing changes in defense, development, and diplomacy spending.[109] Across cross-pillar comparisons as well as disaggregated regional and sectoral analysis, the study uses data through 2024, the latest year for which comparable figures are available, with the exception of Germany's 2024 disaggregated ODA data.[110]

THE 3DS: DATA SOURCES AND DEFINITIONS

Each of the three pillars is analyzed using internationally recognized definitions and the most reliable available data to ensure comparability across countries. Our goal is to integrate these pillars into a single analytic framework, apply consistent cross-country definitions, and produce a unified dataset that enables direct comparison of how major security actors allocate resources across the 3D spectrum.

Defense: We use SIPRI's Military Expenditure Database, which compiles official national data and open-source estimates following NATO's standard definition of defense expenditure.[111] Under this framework, military expenditure includes all current and capital spending on armed forces, defense ministries, paramilitary forces trained for military operations, and military space activities.[112] It encompasses personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, construction, research and development, and military aid, while excluding civil defense and past military obligations.[113]

Development: We use OECD-DAC datasets, the international standard for tracking ODA. ODA reporting captures both bilateral and multilateral disbursements, offers harmonized sector classifications, and enables consistent comparisons of donor priorities over time.[114] Total ODA and Core ODA are measured using OECD DAC1 gross disbursement data.[115, 116] To assess where this assistance ultimately flows, including to FCAS, we supplement DAC2A bilateral disbursement data with ONE's estimates of the country-level allocation of multilateral ODA.[117] For sectoral analysis of health

spending, we use the OECD Creditor Reporting System's (CRS) bilateral gross disbursements and ONE's imputed multilateral data, applying purpose codes for health and population programs to measure contributions to global health outcomes.[118, 119, 120] Detailed 2024 recipient, sector, and policy-marker data for Germany are not yet available at the time of this report.

Diplomacy: We use the UN Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG) External Affairs definition, which covers foreign affairs administration, diplomatic and consular services, and contributions to international organizations.[121] We draw on national budget and expenditure reports to isolate expenditures related to foreign ministry operations, diplomatic missions, consular services, and public and cultural diplomacy.[122] Contributions to international organizations are excluded, as they are already frequently recorded as ODA under OECD-DAC rules.

DATA HARMONIZATION AND VALIDATION

We harmonize absolute monetary values to constant 2024 USD to ensure comparability across pillars and years following OECD-DAC methodology.[123] For defense and diplomacy data, current local currency units are first converted to current USD using annual average market exchange rates and then adjusted to constant terms by applying fixed 2024 exchange rates and country-specific GDP deflators. Development data follows a varied approach based on the source: DAC1 data reported in current USD is converted to constant 2024 USD using the OECD-DAC deflation method, while DAC2A and CRS data are utilized in their provided constant 2024 USD form.[124] All economic indicators, including exchange rates, GDP deflators, and current GDP, are sourced from the World Bank's World Development Indicators.[125] Percent-of-GDP calculations utilize current USD for both the spending numerator and the GDP denominator to accurately reflect donor effort relative to economic size within a specific year. All datasets are merged at the country-year level and validated for consistency across the ten donor countries. For all group-level indicators, including sectoral shares and spending-to-GDP ratios, values are calculated as ratios of aggregate spending to aggregate totals across countries.

LIMITATIONS

We recognize three main limitations affecting cross-country comparability. First, while defense, development, and diplomacy figures are harmonized to 2024, the transparency and detail of underlying budget and expenditure data vary across sources. This issue is most pronounced for diplomacy budgets, where countries report different levels of disaggregation, but also affects SIPRI-based military expenditure and line-item ODA data to a lesser extent. To limit the impact of these differences, the analysis relies on the most robust nationally reported totals for each pillar and uses finer-grained categories only when they are available on a comparable basis, with any remaining gaps or asymmetries flagged in the appendices. Second, there is the possibility of overlap across the three pillars, since defense, development, and certain diplomacy activities, such as security assistance or contributions to multilateral institutions, can appear in more than one dataset. To avoid double-counting, we use authoritative definitions for each pillar and analyze them separately rather than aggregating expenditures across categories. Third, diplomacy spending is not reported under a standardized international framework. Countries structure and classify foreign-affairs budgets differently, and no common database isolates 'diplomacy' expenditures. Constructing a comparable diplomacy series therefore requires judgment about which foreign-ministry lines to include or exclude. These definitional choices are guided by a common conceptual framework and documented in Appendices A2 and A3.[126]

APPENDIX A2. DIPLOMACY DATA SOURCES AND METHODS

Overview: Diplomacy spending is identified using the COFOG External Affairs classification as a reference point, extracted from national budget lines that directly finance foreign-affairs administration, diplomatic and consular services, overseas representation, and public and cultural diplomacy activities. Because countries structure external-affairs budgets differently (often bundling ODA, security assistance, and multilateral contributions), we isolate only those expenditures supporting core foreign-ministry operations and bilateral diplomatic presence, consistently excluding development cooperation, stabilization programming, security assistance, and assessed/voluntary contributions to international organizations (where separately identifiable, to avoid double-counting with ODA). All figures reflect actual expenditures where available (or budgeted allocations otherwise, as noted per country), drawn from official primary national sources, and aligned with each country's fiscal or financial-year reporting conventions for cross-country comparability.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL SOURCES AND COVERAGE OF DIPLOMACY SPENDING FOR THE TOP 10 OECD DEFENSE SPENDERS (2015–2024)

Country	Primary Source(s)	Functional Coverage	Exclusions / Notes
United States	Office of Budget & Management (OMB) Historical Tables – Table 3.2 [127]	Function 150; Subfunctions 153–154: State Department operations, diplomatic & consular services, public diplomacy.	Excludes 151 (development), 152 (security assistance), 155 (financial programs). Figures are actual expenditures.
United Kingdom	HM Treasury, Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) 2025 – Table 4.2[128]	General public services – "international services" minus Foreign Economic Aid	Figures are actual expenditures and on a financial-year basis, aligned to the starting calendar year.
France	Performance data (Les données de la performance); [129] Court of Auditors (cour des comptes) NEB 2022[130] & 2024[131]; PLRG 2024[132]	Mission: External Action of the State (Action extérieure de l'État) (Programs 105, 151, 185): Foreign policy, consular affairs, and cultural diplomacy.	Figures are actual expenditures (crédits de paiement exécutés).
Germany	German Federal Budget (Bundeshaushalt Digital)[133]	Chapter 02 – Foreign Affairs (Auswärtige Angelegenheiten): 021 Foreign Missions (Auslandsvertretungen); 024 Cultural Affairs Abroad (Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung); diplomacy components of 029 Other Foreign Affairs (Sonstige auswärtige Angelegenheiten).	Excludes 022 International Organizations (Internationale Organisationen), 023 Economic Cooperation (Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung). Figures are actual expenditures.
Italy	Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation (Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale) (MAECI), Transparency Portal (Stato di Previsione)[134]	Mission 1 (1.1–1.2): Core diplomatic representation and headquarters operations. Mission 4 (4.1, 4.4, 4.6–4.7, 4.9, 4.12–4.13, 4.15, 4.17–4.18): Foreign policy coordination and public/cultural diplomacy.	Excludes programs 4.2 (development), 4.8 & 4.14 (security cooperation). Figures are actual expenditures (per cassa).

Country	Primary Source(s)	Functional Coverage	Exclusions / Notes
Poland	State Budget Execution Report (Sprawozdanie z wykonania budżetu państwa)[135]	Part 45 – Foreign Affairs (Sprawy zagraniczne) under Division 750 – Public Administration (Administracja publiczna): foreign policy administration, diplomatic and consular services, and public/cultural diplomacy.	Excluded are Division 752– National Defense (Obrona narodowa), Division 853 – Other Social Policy Tasks (Pozostałe zadania z zakresu polityki społecznej), and Chapter 75079 – Foreign Aid (Pomoc zagraniczna). Figures are actual expenditures (wykonany).
Australia	Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) Portfolio Budget Statements (2015–2024)[136]	Outcome 1 (1.1, 1.5, 1.6); Outcome 2 (2.1); Outcome 3 (3.1–3.2): foreign-affairs administration, public diplomacy, consular services, overseas presence.	Excludes Outcomes 1.2–1.4 (ODA), 1.7 (tourism), 2.2 (passports); EFIC from 1.1. Figures are estimated actuals on a financial-year basis.
Israel	State Budget Laws (Knesset legislation portal)[137]	Ministry of Foreign Affairs programs 51.01 (headquarters), 51.02 (embassies/consulates), 51.03 (diplomatic activity): public & cultural diplomacy.	MASHAV (ODA) excluded; no enacted budget for 2020 (continuing appropriations). Figures are budget allocations.
Japan	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Diplomatic Bluebooks[138]; MOFA White Papers on Development Cooperation[139]; MOFA OSA Press Release[140]	MOFA budget appropriations minus ODA allocated to the ministry: diplomatic mission operations, consular services, public diplomacy, non-ODA assessed contributions to international organizations, and economic diplomacy.	Official Security Assistance (OSA) excluded. Figures represent budget allocations.
South Korea	Open Fiscal Data Portal[141]; Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Annual Reports[142]; National Assembly Budget Office (NABO) Budget Results[143]	MOFA budget excluding KOICA and ODA-related activities.	Figures for 2015-2022 are actual expenditures, while figures for 2023-2024 are budget allocations.

APPENDIX A3. DETAILED COUNTRY NOTES

United States: Diplomacy spending corresponds to OMB Budget Function 150 (International Affairs), limited to subfunctions 153 – Conduct of Foreign Affairs and 154 – Foreign Information and Exchange Activities. These capture State Department operations, diplomatic and consular services, assessed non-ODA contributions to international organizations, and public diplomacy and exchange programs. Excluded are 151 – International Development and Humanitarian Assistance, 152 – International Security Assistance, and 155 – International Financial Programs. Outlays represent actual expenditures (cash disbursements).

United Kingdom: Diplomacy spending is derived from HM Treasury's Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA), using functional expenditure categories that correspond to COFOG Level 2 external-affairs activities. Diplomacy is measured as the portion of "international services" reported under the General public services function (Table 4.2), after subtracting "Foreign economic aid" from Table 5.2, which removes ODA-related expenditures. All figures are outturns, originally presented on a financial-year basis; for cross-country comparability, each financial year is aligned to its starting calendar year.

Germany: Diplomacy spending is drawn from the Federal Ministry of Finance's Bundeshaushalt Digital Portal, using the functional classification for Function 0 – General Services (*Funktionen* 0 – *Allgemeine Dienste*), Chapter 02 – Foreign Affairs (*Kapitel 02 – Auswärtige Angelegenheiten*). Diplomacy corresponds to expenditures recorded under Chapter 021 – Foreign Missions (*Titel 012 – Auslandsvertretungen*), 024 Foreign Schools and Cultural Affairs Abroad (*Titel 024 – Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung*), and the diplomacy-relevant components of 029 Other Foreign Affairs (*Titel 029 – Sonstige auswärtige Angelegenheiten*). Items in 029 that constitute humanitarian assistance, stabilization programming, democracy support, or other development activities are excluded to avoid overlap with ODA. Chapter 023 – Economic Cooperation and Development (*Titel 023 – Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung*) and 022 – International Organizations (*Titel 022 – Internationale Organisationen*) are excluded, which comprise of ODA and assessed and voluntary multilateral contributions. The remaining expenditures represent Germany's core diplomatic apparatus, including international representation, cultural diplomacy, political foundations, presidencies, public diplomacy, treaty obligations, and administrative support to the Foreign Office. All values reflect actual annual expenditures.

France: Diplomacy spending corresponds to the Mission: External Action of the State (*Action extérieure de l'État*), which encompasses the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs' core foreign policy, consular, and cultural diplomacy activities (Programmes 105, 151, 185). Figures represent actual expenditures (*crédits de paiement exécutés*) for each fiscal year. For 2015–2021, data come from the Budgetary performance data (*Les données de la performance*) series; for 2022 and 2024, figures are from the Budget execution notes (*Notes d'exécution budgétaire*) of the Court of Auditors (*Cour des comptes*); and for 2023, data are from the Draft law relating to management results (*Projet de loi relatif aux résultats de la gestion*) (PLRG), which consolidates the actual spending.

Italy: Italy's diplomacy spending is drawn from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) and includes the programs that form the ministry's core diplomatic, consular, administrative, and cultural-external-action functions. Diplomacy corresponds to Mission 1 – Institutional and General Services of Public Administrations (*Servizi istituzionali e generali delle amministrazioni pubbliche*), specifically Programme 1.1 – Political Leadership (*Indirizzo politico*) and Programme 1.2 – General and Administrative Services (*Servizi e affari generali*), and to the diplomacy components of Mission 4 – Italy in Europe and the World (*L'Italia in Europa e nel mondo*). The relevant Mission 4 programs include those covering political and multilateral diplomacy, consular services, economic and cultural diplomacy, representation within the European Union, public diplomacy, and the operation, security, and coordination of Italy's diplomatic network abroad (Programs

4.1, 4.4, 4.6–4.7, 4.9, 4.12–4.13, 4.15, 4.17–4.18). Programmes dedicated to development cooperation (Program 4.2 – *Cooperazione allo sviluppo*) and to political–security or stabilization cooperation (Programs 4.8 – *Cooperazione internazionale per la pace e la sicurezza* and 4.14 – *Cooperazione in materia di sicurezza internazionale*) are excluded. Expenditures reflect actual expenditures.

Poland: Diplomacy spending is obtained from Poland's State Budget Execution Reports (2015–2023), which record actual expenditures (*wykonany*) by ministry (*część*), sector (*dział*), and program (*rozdział*). Data are drawn from Part 45 – Foreign Affairs (*Sprawy zagraniczne*) under Division 750 – Public Administration (*Dział 750 – Administracja publiczna*), covering foreign policy administration, diplomatic and consular services, international representation, and public/cultural diplomacy. Excluded are Division 752– National Defense (*Dział 752 – Obrona narodowa*), Division 853 – Other Social Policy Tasks (*Dział 853 – Pozostałe zadania z zakresu polityki społecznej*), and Chapter 75079 – Foreign Aid (*Rozdział 75079 – Pomoc zagraniczna*).

Australia: Diplomacy spending is compiled from DFAT's budgeted expenditures under Outcome 1 (*Advancement of Interests*), Outcome 2 (*Australians Abroad*) and Outcome 3 (*Secure Presence Overseas*). Included programs: 1.1 Foreign Affairs and Trade Operations; 1.5 New Colombo Plan; 1.6 Public Diplomacy; 3.1 Foreign Affairs and Trade Security and IT, and 3.2 Overseas Property. Programs 1.7 International Tourism Interests, all ODA (Programs 1.2–1.4), 2.2 Passport Services, and contributions to Australia's Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (EFIC) under Program 1.1 are excluded. Figures reflect estimated actual expenditures on a financial-year basis.

Israel: Diplomacy spending is drawn from the State Budget Laws (ביצקתה יקוח) published annually by the Ministry of Finance (MFA) and archived on the Knesset legislation portal. Coverage includes the MFA budget lines covering headquarters operations in Israel (51.01), the operation of embassies and consulates abroad (51.02), and diplomatic activity abroad (51.03). Contributions to international organizations are excluded from diplomacy spending, as is ODA, which is implemented separately through the Agency for International Development Cooperation (MASHAV). No state budget was enacted for 2020, during which the government operated under a continuing budget until approval of the 2020–2021 budget in November 2021. Figures are budgeted allocations.

Japan: Diplomacy spending is derived from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MOFA) total budget appropriations (initial plus supplementary) minus MOFA-specific ODA budget appropriations for each fiscal year. We exclude Official Security Assistance (OSA) from 2023-2024 data, as it was established in 2023 and falls under defense spending calculations. This isolates budgeted resources for diplomatic mission operations, consular services, public diplomacy, non-ODA assessed contributions to international organizations, and economic diplomacy. All figures represent authorized budget appropriations.

South Korea: Diplomacy spending is derived from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) budget by excluding all expenditures under the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). KOICA operates under MOFA and implements Korea's bilateral grant and technical cooperation projects; therefore, this program represents the ODA component of MOFA's budget. For 2015–2022, total annual MOFA budgets are obtained from the Ministry of Economy and Finance's Open Fiscal Data Portal, while KOICA's annual government contributions are taken from KOICA's official annual reports. For 2023–2024, where only projected data is available, KOICA ODA amounts are subtracted from MOFA's total budget using the National Assembly Budget Office (NABO) Budget Deliberation Results.

Endnotes

1 This statement refers to absolute military spending. See Xiao Liang et al., *Trends in World Military Expenditure,* 2024 (Stockholm: SIPRI, April 2025), 1, https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2025-04/2504_fs_milex_2024.pdf.

2 See Clara Falkenek, "Who's at 2 Percent? Look How NATO Allies Have Increased Their Defense Spending Since Russia's Invasion of Ukraine," *Atlantic Council,* July 8, 2024, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/econographics/whos-at-2-percent-look-how-nato-allies-have-increased-their-defense-spending-since-russias-invasion-of-ukraine/ and Alice Tidey and Shona Murray, "Defence Spend to 5% of GDP, Ukraine, Russia: The Key Takeaways from the NATO Summit," Euronews, June 25, 2025, https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/06/25/defence-spend-to-5-of-gdp-ukraine-russia-the-key-takeaways-from-the-nato-summit.

3 The 5% pledge consists of two distinct elements: at least 3.5% of GDP for NATO-defined core defence expenditures and capability targets, and up to 1.5% of GDP for broader security functions such as infrastructure protection, cyber defence, civil preparedness, innovation, and strengthening the defense industrial base. See "Defence Expenditures and NATO's 5% Commitment," NATO, June 27, 2025, https://www.nato.int/en/what-we-do/introduction-to-nato/defence-expenditures-and-natos-5-commitment.

4 The ODA benchmark for OECD-DAC countries is 0.7% of GNI. See "A Generational Shift: The Future of Foreign Aid," *McKinsey & Company*, May 6, 2025, https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/social-sector/our-insights/a-generational-shift-the-future-of-foreign-aid; "Cuts in Official Development Assistance: OECD projections for 2025 and the near term," *OECD*, June 26, 2025, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2025/06/cuts-in-official-development-assistance_e161f0c5/full-report.html; and Matthew Lee, Farnoush Amiri, and Manuel Balce Ceneta, "State Department Lays Off over 1,300 Employees under Trump Administration Plan," *Associated Press*, July 11, 2025, https://apnews.com/article/layoffs-diplomats-state-department-trump-rubio-bfdb86767b7bd5b6570819d404a7782e.

5 "Zeitenwende" denotes the major strategic shift in German security and foreign policy announced by then-Chancellor Olaf Scholz following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. See, "Zeitenwende," *Bundesministerium der Verteidigung,* accessed November 23, 2025, https://www.bmvg.de/de/themen/sicherheitspolitik/zeitenwende.

6 The "3 Ds" framework, Diplomacy, Development, and Defense, originated in the early 2000s as a cornerstone of US national security strategy, integrating engagement, prevention, and protection into a single concept. This report adopts the 3D framework because it is the most widely institutionalized model linking military, developmental, and diplomatic spending, offering a practical, policy-grounded lens for cross-country comparison, even beyond the US context, to evaluate whether governments are pursuing a balanced and sustainable approach to security. See Nafees Asiya Syed, "The 3 D's of Foreign Affairs," *Harvard Political Review,* September 17, 2010, https://harvardpolitics.com/the-3ds-of-foreign-affairs/ and Bureau of Resource Management, *FY 2010 Department of State Agency Financial Report* (Washington, D.C.: US Department of State, November 15, 2010), https://2009-2017.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/perfrpt/2010/html/153715.htm.

7 To our knowledge, no prior study has produced a fully harmonized 3D comparison across defense, development, and diplomacy for the top 10 OECD defense spenders between 2015-2024. A related earlier effort by Nicole Koenig and Jörg Haas (2017) examined 3D spending patterns primarily for the EU as a collective actor during the first Trump administration. While their work offered valuable insights, it covered a narrower geographic scope, reflected a different geopolitical moment, and analyzed a shorter temporal window. See Nicole Koenig and Jörg Haas, "The EU as a 3-D Power: Should Europe Spend More on Diplomacy, Development and Defence?," *Jacques Delors Institut*, September 14, 2017, https://institutdelors.eu/en/publications/the-eu-as-a-3-d-power-should-europe-spend-more-on-diplomacy-development-and-defence/.

8 See Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *Military Expenditure Database* (Stockholm: SIPRI, 2024), accessed December 28, 2025, https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex.

9 See "What Is Human Security?," *United Nations (UN),* accessed December 5, 2025, https://www.un.org/humansecurity/what-is-human-security/.

10 This trend is aligned with the broader global surge in military expenditure. Over the past decade, global defense spending has risen rapidly, reaching $2.7 trillion in 2024, a nearly 10% increase from the year before and the steepest annual increase since the end of the Cold War. See "Unprecedented Rise in Global Military Expenditure as European and Middle East Spending Surges," SIPRI, April 28, 2025, https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2025/unprecedented-rise-global-military-expenditure-european-and-middle-east-spending-surges.

11 This is due to Israel's ongoing war against Gaza.

12 US defense spending has risen substantially in real terms while remaining stable as a share of GDP, hovering around 3.4% over the last decade.

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