



DEFENDER 25

Fact Sheet

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What is DEFENDER 25?

The European theater is the Army's test bed for innovation. U.S. troops demonstrate large-scale warfighting capabilities while simultaneously adapting to work alongside Allies and partners from the Arctic to the Black Sea in support of global deterrence.

As part of the U.S. Army's Transformation in Contact, concepts, formations, and equipment tested and validated here have global exportability. U.S. troops return from large-scale training in Europe ready, trained, and postured to meet any challenge, anywhere.

This exercise demonstrates U.S. Army Europe and Africa's ability to aggregate U.S.-based combat power quickly in Europe and the Arctic region, increases lethality of the NATO Alliance through large-scale tactical training maneuvers and long-range fires, builds unit readiness in a complex joint, multinational environment and leverages host nation capabilities to increase the Army's operational reach.

The Dynamic Employment of Forces to Europe for NATO Deterrence and Enhanced Readiness exercise, also known as DEFENDER, takes place from May 11-June 24, 2025. This year, the exercise focuses on the strategic deployment of forces, employment of Army Prepositioned Stock and follow-on exercises demonstrating lethality and interoperability with Allies and partners.

Three phases of DEFENDER 25:

- ***Swift Response (May 11-31, 2025)***
 - Through airborne operations and integration of technology in support of the Army Modernization Strategy and DoD Arctic Strategy, Swift Response 25 demonstrates multinational power projection and the expansion of critical capabilities on the battlefield in the High North and the Baltics.
 - Swift Response 25 involves five near-simultaneous airborne insertions, HIRAIN training, a field hospital exercise and live fires conducted with NATO networks.
 - **7** host nations: Norway, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, and Finland
 - **4,000** U.S. troops and **2,000** Allied and partner participants from **14** countries
- ***Immediate Response (May 26-June 9, 2025)***
 - By enhancing cyber and CBRNE defense capabilities, NATO integration through state partnership readiness programs and multinational exercises, Immediate Response 25 upholds U.S. commitments to the Alliance and equips NATO's regional plans.
 - Immediate Response 25 features multinational live fires conducted with NATO networks, a cyber exercise, a water crossing, and CBRNE exercises.
 - **8** host nations: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Slovakia
 - **4,000** U.S. troops and **8,000** Allied and partner participants from **20** countries

As of: May 28, 2025

- **Saber Guardian (June 9-24, 2025)**
 - In developing the warfighting capabilities of NATO's national and multinational corps and division forces, Saber Guardian 25 is designed to rehearse NATO land component mission command architecture and improve the integration of multinational combat forces in a fast-paced scenario.
 - The exercise includes tactical movements, multiple river crossings, and live-fire exercises.
 - **3** host nations: Czechia, Hungary, and Romania
 - More than **2,000** U.S. troops and **8,000** Allied and partner participants from **7** countries

Quick Facts:

- Approximately **25,000** U.S. troops, Allies and partners
- **12,000** U.S. troops
- **5,000** U.S.-based troops and over **3,000** pieces of equipment are deploying to Europe
- **13,000** Allied, partner, and participating troops from **30** nations:

○ Albania	○ Greece	○ Poland
○ Austria	○ Hungary	○ Portugal
○ Bosnia and Herzegovina	○ Italy	○ Romania
○ Brazil	○ Kosovo	○ Slovakia
○ Bulgaria	○ Latvia	○ Slovenia
○ Croatia	○ Lithuania	○ Spain
○ Finland	○ Moldova	○ Sweden
○ France	○ Montenegro	○ Türkiye
○ Georgia	○ Netherlands	○ United Kingdom
○ Germany	○ North Macedonia	
	○ Norway	
- **18** host nations

○ Albania	○ Hungary	○ Norway
○ Bulgaria	○ Kosovo	○ Poland
○ Croatia	○ Latvia	○ Romania
○ Czechia	○ Lithuania	○ Slovakia
○ Finland	○ Montenegro	○ Slovenia
○ Greece	○ North Macedonia	○ Sweden
- **9** U.S. Army National Guard units participating:

○ Alabama Army National Guard	○ New Jersey Army National Guard
○ Delaware Army National Guard	○ Pennsylvania Army National Guard
○ Iowa Army National Guard	○ Tennessee Army National Guard
○ Maine Army National Guard	○ Vermont Army National Guard
○ Maryland Army National Guard	
- **3** U.S. Army Reserve units participating:
 - Army Reserve 5th Battalion, 159th General Support Aviation Brigade
 - Army Reserve 304th Sustainment Brigade
 - Army Reserve Blood Detachment, 7384th Blood Support Detachment

- **5 Joint Forcible Entries:**
 - Finland
 - Latvia
 - Lithuania
 - Norway
 - Sweden
- **5 linked host nation exercises:**
 - Balkan Sentinel (Bulgaria)
 - Crystal Arrow (Latvia)
 - Iron Wolf (Lithuania)
 - Laufer (Croatia)
 - Lift (Croatia)
- **3 water crossings:**
 - One in Greece
 - Two in Romania
- **3 Army Prepositioned Stock issue sites:**
 - Germany
 - Greece
 - the Netherlands

DEFENDER 25 first-time events:

- U.S. High Mobility Artillery Rocket System live-fire on Gotland Island, Sweden
- 82nd Airborne Division's large-scale operation and direct delivery air assault into the High North
- Equipment reception at the Port of Kavala, Greece
- Reception of rotary aircraft at the Port of Narvik, Norway
- Blood resupply by drone
- Issue of blood supply detachment equipment and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives protective equipment from Army Prepositioned Stock
- Showcasing the European theater as the Army's test bed for adapting Transformation in Contact units, such as the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, to work alongside Allies and partners from the Arctic to the Black Sea region