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Public Trust in NATO and Defence Institutions,

Perceptions of Russia,
and Willingness to Fight
in NATO Countries

UDK 327
An318



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Public Trust in NATO and Defence Institutions, Perceptions of Russia, and Willingness to Fight in NATO Countries

This brief publication provides an overview of public opinion across all 32 NATO member states on trust in NATO, the army, and the police; support for armed resistance; willingness to fight for their respective countries; and perceptions of Russia's responsibility for the war in Ukraine. It draws on nationally representative data collected in 2025.

September 2026

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Cover and layout design: Mikus Čavarts

This publication was made possible by:

SPANSOPHICO

BRASA
DEFENCE SYSTEMS

Survey data were collected as part of the project "Why People Would (Not) Fight for Their Own Country in a War? NATO Member States at a Cross-Section," funded by the European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility and the state budget of the Republic of Latvia as part of the project "RSU Internal and RSU with LASE External Consolidation" (No. 5.2.1.1.i.0/2/24/I/CFLA/005).

The authors gratefully acknowledge Rīga Stradiņš University.



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ISBN 978-9934-9317-8-9

ISBN 978-9934-9317-9-6 (pdf)

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INTRODUCTION

This brief publication provides an overview of public opinion across all 32 North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) member states on trust in the Alliance, the army, and the police; support for armed resistance; willingness to fight for their respective countries; and perceptions of Russia's responsibility for the war in Ukraine.

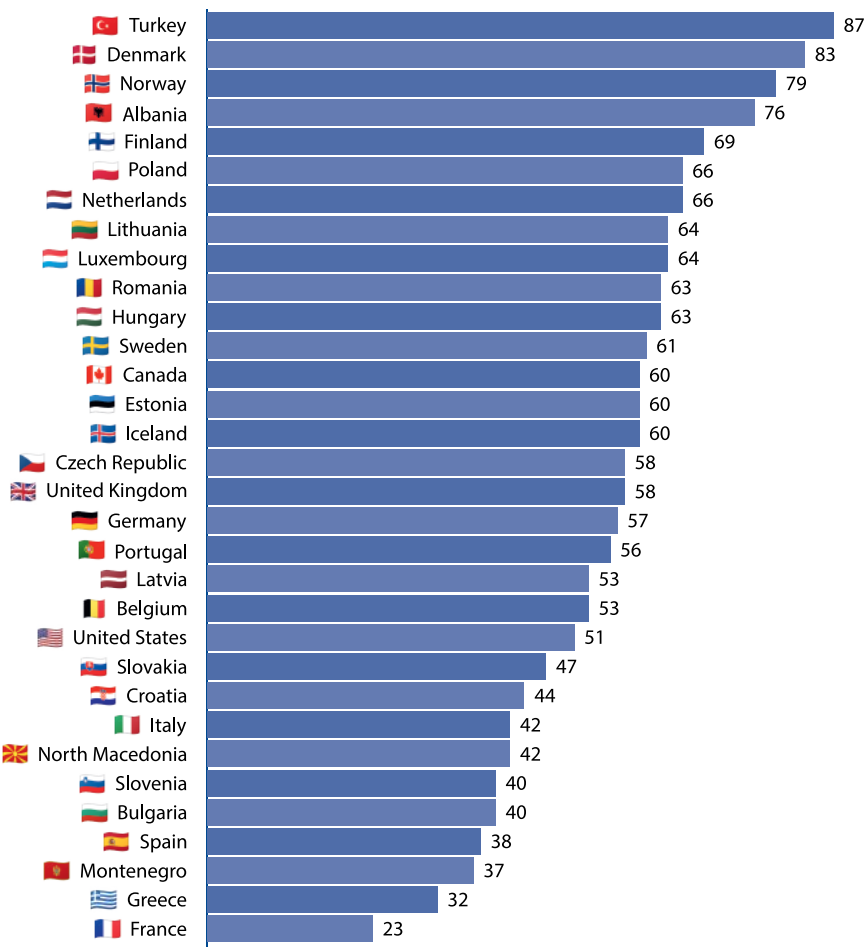
While other cross-national polls have examined attitudes towards NATO, defence, and the war in Ukraine, to our knowledge, this is the first survey to examine this particular set of questions across all NATO member states. We used an identical questionnaire across all 32 countries, enabling comparative analysis.

This publication is intended as an initial overview of the data. Full datasets will be made available once our research team has published key peer-reviewed academic articles based on the project. Because public opinion can change during the peer-review process, we are sharing the key findings now for the public's benefit. More information on related early research from this project is available [here](#).

Public opinion company Norstat collected the data through nationally representative web and telephone surveys across all 32 NATO member states in September-October 2025, under an agreement with Rīga Stradiņš University. The total sample comprised 31,217 respondents from the general population aged 18 and older.

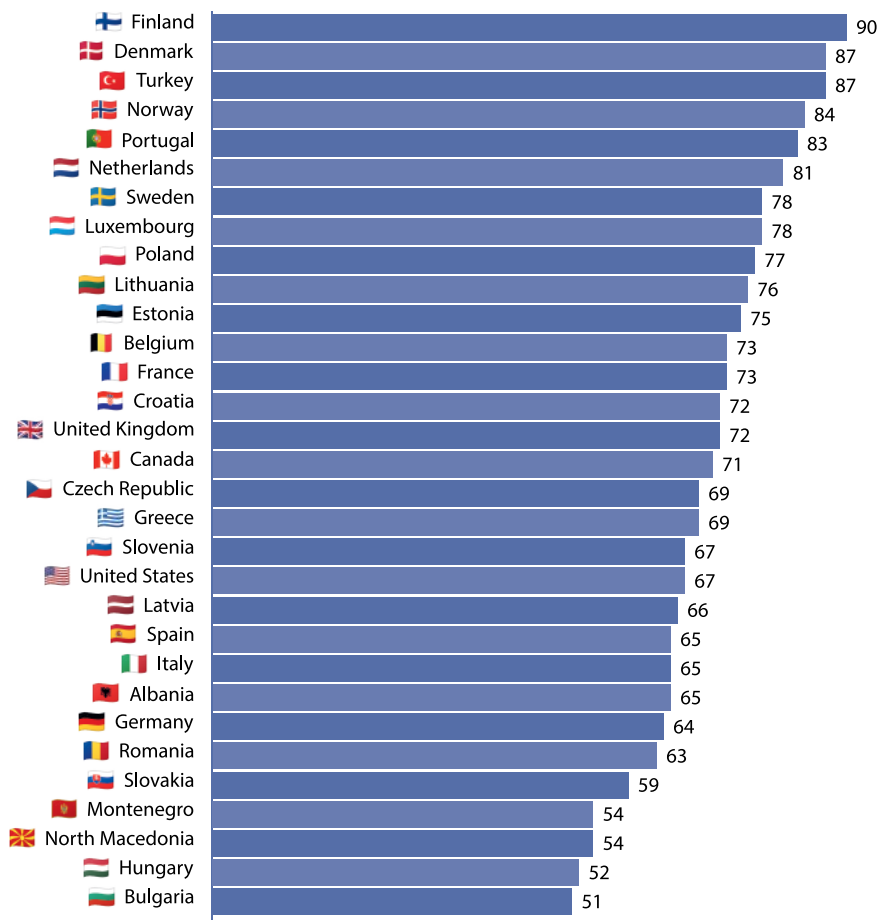
Suggested citation: Andžāns, Māris, Juris Pupčēnoks, and Kaspars Ģermanis. 2026. *Public Trust in NATO and Defence Institutions, Perceptions of Russia, and Willingness to Fight in NATO Countries*. Riga: Center for Geopolitical Studies Riga.

TRUST IN NATO



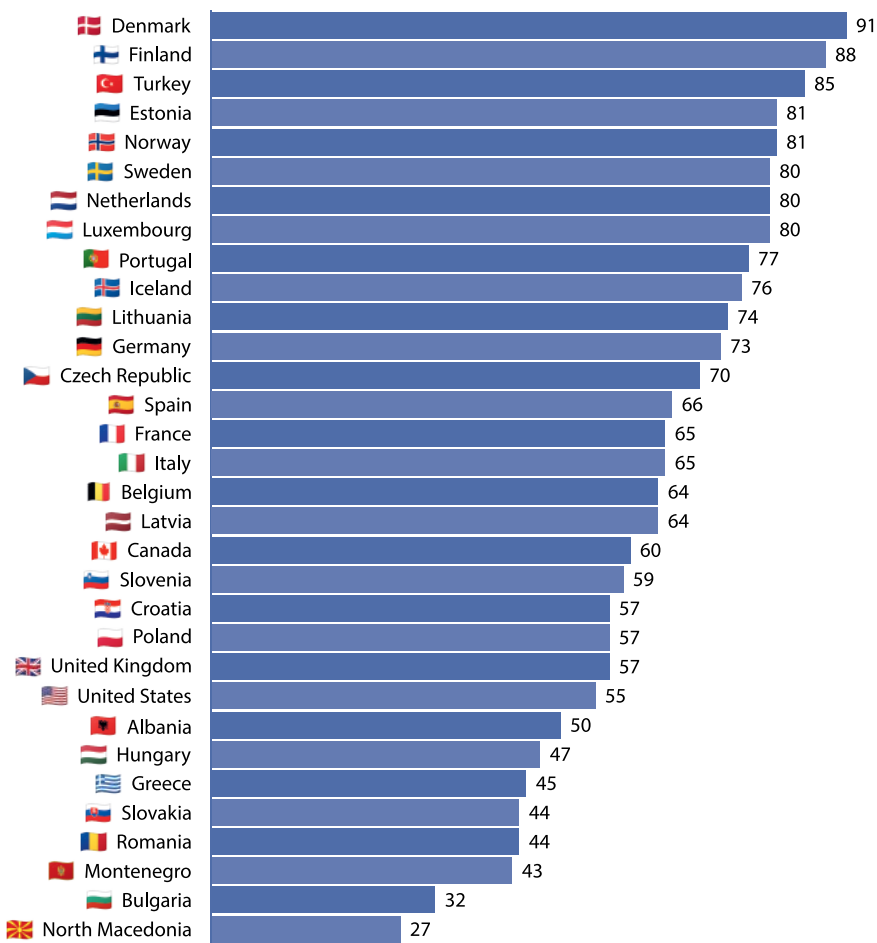
The percentage of respondents who “tend to trust” and “tend to rather trust” NATO.

TRUST IN THE ARMY



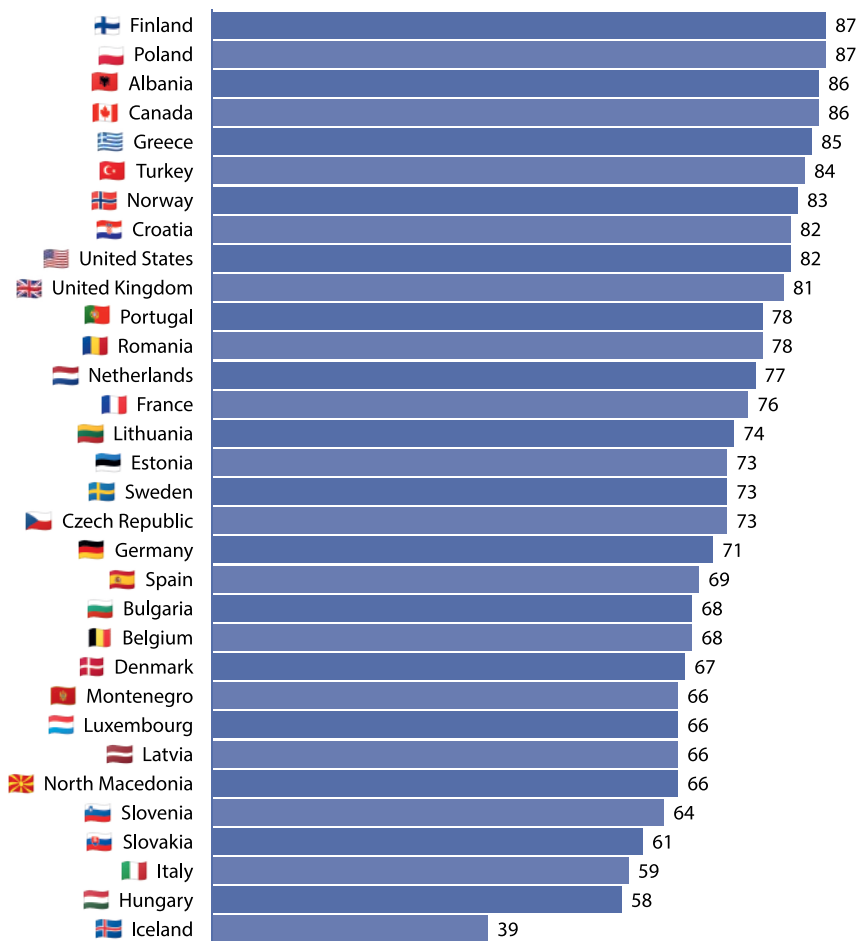
The percentage of respondents who “tend to trust” and “tend to rather trust” the army (Iceland has no armed forces and is thus not listed).

TRUST IN THE POLICE



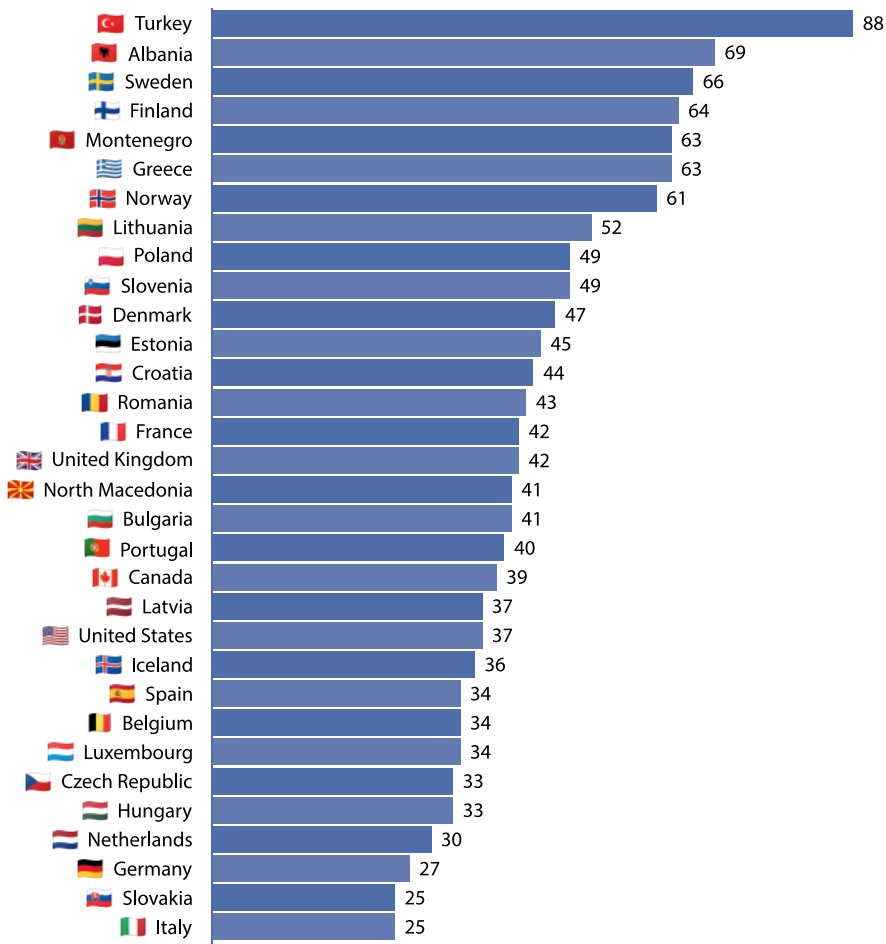
The percentage of respondents who “tend to trust” and “tend to rather trust” the police.

SUPPORT FOR ARMED RESISTANCE



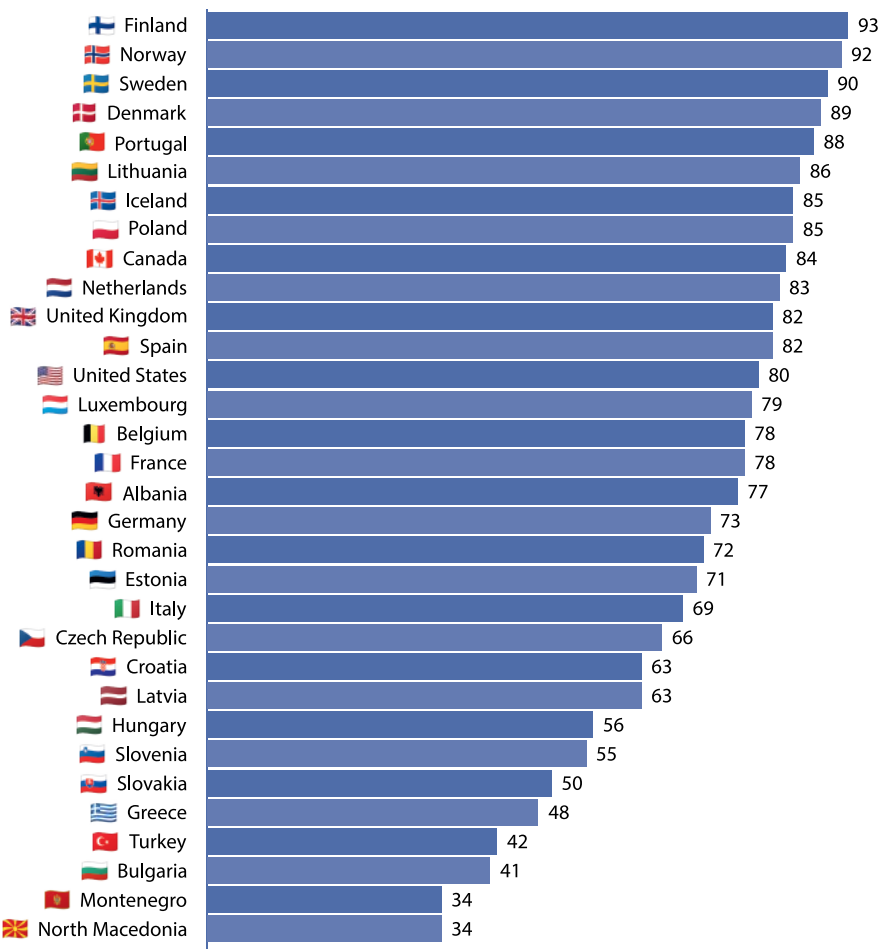
The percentage of respondents answering “definitely yes” and “probably yes” to the question: “If [Country] were to be attacked by another country, should we definitely provide armed resistance, regardless of the attacker?”

WILLINGNESS TO FIGHT FOR ONE'S OWN COUNTRY



The percentage of respondents answering “definitely yes” and “probably yes” to the question: “Of course, we all hope that there will not be another war, but if it were to come to that, would you be willing to fight for [Country]?”

BLAMING RUSSIA FOR THE WAR IN UKRAINE



The percentage of respondents in each country answering “Russia” to the question: “Who caused the war in Ukraine?”

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The survey data reveal both unity and diversity across NATO. Trust in the armed forces is generally strong, and support for armed resistance is widespread. However, trust in NATO, personal willingness to fight, and the views about Russia's responsibility for the war in Ukraine vary considerably across NATO member states.

Additional patterns stand out. First, trust in the army tends to exceed trust in NATO. Second, support for armed resistance tends to exceed individual willingness to fight. Third, Nordic countries frequently rank among the strongest performers, combining high levels of institutional trust with strong support for defence.

This publication provides only an initial descriptive overview of the data. More detailed analyses and interpretations will be presented in forthcoming peer-reviewed publications. Taken together, these findings highlight both the foundations of Allied resilience and the important differences in public attitudes that shape it across NATO.

AUTHORS' INFORMATION

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Dr Juris Pupčenoks is a Professor at Marist University in the United States, where he chairs the Political Science Department. He is also a Senior Researcher at the Center for Geopolitical Studies Riga and an Associate Fellow at the Academy of International Affairs NRW in Bonn, where he previously served as a Fellow.

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