

## Key NATO and Allied exercises in 2021

NATO Allies and partners conduct exercises to test procedures and tactics, develop best practices and identify areas for improvement. Exercises are designed to ensure that NATO forces are trained, able to operate together and ready to respond to any threat from any direction.

NATO exercises vary in scope, duration and form. Live exercises can involve thousands of troops; they aim to demonstrate and develop the extensive military capabilities that NATO Allies need to keep our nations safe. Computer-assisted exercises take place in a classroom and focus on procedures.

In addition to military exercises, the Alliance organises civilian and political training events as well. Allies also train together in national and multi-national exercises.

### NATO and Allied exercises in numbers

In 2020, NATO conducted 88 of the 113 NATO military exercises originally scheduled for 2020. Allies held 176 national and multinational exercises. The COVID-19 pandemic did affect the full execution of the planned NATO Exercise Programme, and some NATO exercises were modified or cancelled. For the others, sensible precautions were taken to ensure participants' safety. The overall impact on NATO's exercise programme has been limited.

For 2021, a total of 95 NATO exercises are planned. According to information provided by Allies, they will conduct 220 national and multinational exercises.

The exercises led by NATO and Allies this year include around 20 joint (multi-domain) exercises, 24 exercises primarily focused on the land domain, 24 exercises in the air domain, and 9 exercises focused mainly on maritime operations. Many other exercises train specific functions or skills such as cyber defence, crisis response decision-making, Chemical, Biological, Radiological Nuclear defense, logistics, communications and medical activities.

### Transparency

NATO exercises are defensive and designed to respond to the security challenges that Allies are facing today and in the future. They are not directed against any country, and are based on fictitious scenarios and adversaries.

The Alliance respects all its international obligations with regard to military exercises. Under the OSCE Vienna Document, exercises must be notified by their host nations to OSCE member states 42 days in advance if exceeding 9,000 troops. Observation is required starting at 13,000 troops. In line with these requirements, NATO military exercises are open to international observers.

Many NATO exercises are open to partners beyond the Alliance. In 2020, 38 NATO exercises were open to partners, and in 2021 the number is 37. International organisations, including the European Union, are also invited to observe or participate in NATO exercises. As part of this commitment to transparency, NATO exercises are announced months in advance and published at: <http://www.shape.nato.int/exercises>.

All of this highlights the defensive and transparent nature of our training activities.

### Naming NATO exercises

NATO exercises follow a naming convention to delineate the responsible headquarters and the focus of the exercise. The first word in the name of a NATO exercise identifies the responsible headquarters. For example, any exercise starting with the word STEADFAST is run by the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE). The second word in a NATO exercise communicates the function, domain or capability of the exercise. More information is available [here](#).



## Key NATO and Allied Multinational exercises in 2021

INFORMATION	DATE	LOCATION
<p><b>RAMSTEIN GUARD 21</b></p> <p>This series of 12 NATO exercises trains NATO Air Command in Ramstein in electronic warfare.</p>	Every Month	Different locations
<p><b>GRIFFIN FORCE I 2021</b></p> <p>An exercise aimed at training the land component of the NATO VJTF (Very High Readiness Joint Task Force), the commands involved in its deployment, as well as host and receiving nations. The purpose is to train the enablement of NATO forces and rapid military mobility.</p>	18 - 20 January	Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland
<p><b>DYNAMIC MANTA 21</b></p> <p>Annual NATO aero-naval exercise aimed at testing submarine warfare and anti-submarine warfare capabilities. It provides a framework for naval forces to maintain high readiness and ability to operate together. The exercise involves naval and air units from multiple NATO countries.</p>	22 February - 4 March	Italy Mediterranean Sea
<p><b>JOINT WARRIOR 21</b></p> <p>A UK-led multinational live exercise with several Allies, providing collective training in tactical formations and preparing participants to operate as a combined joint task force.</p>	26 March - 6 April	United Kingdom
<p><b>LOCKED SHIELDS 21</b></p> <p>One of the world's largest and most complex live cyber defence exercises, hosted annually by the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence. NATO cyber defenders participate alongside their colleagues from many Allies and partners. The exercise simulates responding to a massive cyber incident, and includes strategic decision-making, legal and communication aspects.</p>	1 - 30 April	Estonia
<p><b>STEADFAST ARMOUR 21</b></p> <p>A table-top exercise to train NATO's tactical and operational abilities to transition from Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD) peacetime mission to an IAMD operation with focus on Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD)</p>	5 - 17 April	Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, UK
<p><b>RAMSTEIN DUST II 21</b></p> <p>An exercise focused on the control of air missions, the provision of air surveillance and the production of a recognised air picture as part of a simulated NATO operation.</p>	12 - 23 April	Greece
<p><b>RAMSTEIN ALLOY 1, 2 and 3</b></p> <p>These live exercises have Article 5 scenarios, with a focus on the Air domain. They will promote interoperability, coordination and work with partners Finland and Sweden.</p>	19 - 21 April 28 - 30 June 20 - 22 September	Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
<p><b>CWIX 21</b></p> <p>The NATO Coalition Warrior Interoperability exploration, experimentation, examination, exercise (CWIX) is an annual event designed to support the continuous improvement in interoperability of the Alliance. It focusses on the validation and verification of Communication and Information Systems (CIS), and experimental, developmental and fielded CIS. The participants include engineers, operators and software developers.</p>	10 - 22 May	Poland
<p><b>SPRING STORM 21</b></p> <p>A large live exercise of the Estonian Defence Forces, with participation from NATO's enhanced Forward Presence battlegroups and other Allied forces. Some 14,000 military personnel are expected to participate.</p>	11 - 31 May	Estonia

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<p><b>MARE APERTO 21</b></p> <p>Italian-led live maritime exercise to train and test commands, staff and forces in a multidimensional scenario. Size 1500.</p>	12 - 28 May	Italy
<p><b>AT SEA DEMONSTRATION - FORMIDABLE SHIELD 21</b></p> <p>A large-scale tactical exercise led by the US Sixth Fleet, this will enable nations and units to incorporate capability development and training in the context of Integrated Air and Missile Defence.</p>	14 May - 2 June	Norway United Kingdom
<p><b>NOBLE JUMP II 21</b></p> <p>This exercise will see the deployment of elements of the VJTF to test NATO's deployment functions and the NATO Force Integration Units (NFIU) concept.</p>	19 May - 1 June	Romania
<p><b>STEADFAST DEFENDER 21</b></p> <p>This major joint exercise will focus on the reinforcement of the VJTF across the Atlantic and throughout Europe, with a focus on deterrence operations in South-Eastern Europe. It will train and evaluate a wide range of elements of the NATO Command Structure (NCS), NATO Force Structure (NFS), and National Force Elements involved in the enablement and deployment of the VJTF.</p>	20 May - 22 June	Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Portugal
<p><b>SABER GUARDIAN 21</b></p> <p>A bi-annual multinational exercise, led by US Army Europe with a focus on training collective defence.</p>	24 May - 9 June	Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary
<p><b>BALTOPS 21</b></p> <p>Annual US-led maritime exercise. Participating Allies include Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Poland. Partners Finland and Sweden are also expected to take part.</p>	1 - 21 June	Germany and the Baltic Sea
<p><b>DYNAMIC MONGOOSE 21</b></p> <p>Annual NATO exercise in the North Atlantic to train submarine warfare and anti-submarine warfare for submarines, anti-submarine surface units and maritime patrol aircraft. This exercise will involve up to 500 participants.</p>	28 June - 12 July	Norway
<p><b>BREEZE 21</b></p> <p>A live exercise led by the Bulgarian Navy aimed at enhancing interoperability at the tactical level among participating naval units and staffs in conducting conventional and non-conventional warfare. Size: around 2500 people.</p>	11-19 July	Bulgaria
<p><b>IRON WOLF II 21</b></p> <p>A Lithuanian live exercise in the land domain, aimed at training NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) and enhancing the interoperability of multinational forces. Size: 4000 people.</p>	1 - 26 November	Lithuania
<p><b>CYBER COALITION 21</b></p> <p>One of the biggest cyber defence exercises in the world, this NATO exercise trains and tests cyber defenders from across the Alliance.</p>	15 - 21 November	The Netherlands
<p><b>STEADFAST JACKAL 21</b></p> <p>Tabletop exercise focused on the planning and conduct of a limited joint Non-Article 5 operation against insurgents beyond the territory of the Alliance, targeting NATO in the land and cyber domains.</p>	30 November - 9 December	France, Italy, Turkey,



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