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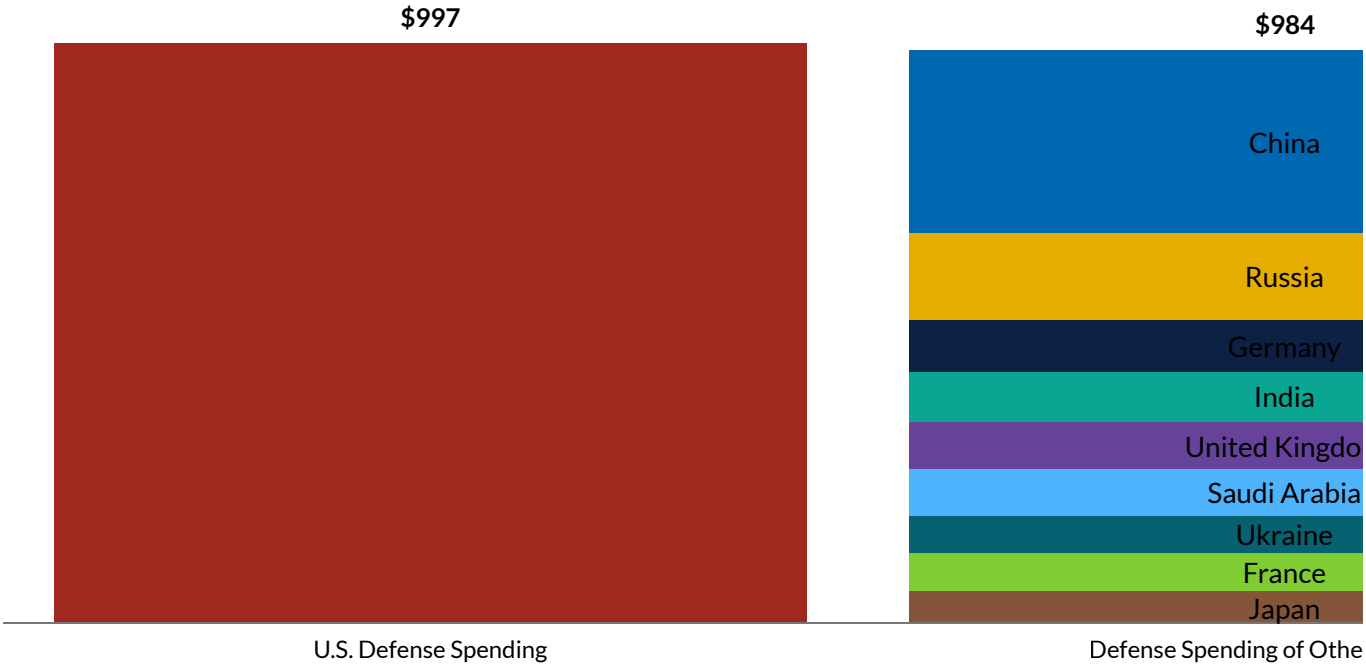
DEFENSE SPENDING

America's fiscal, economic, and national security are closely linked.

In a complex and changing global landscape, the United States faces a range of critical challenges to its security and leadership role in the world. At the same time, America's unsustainable national debt is a dangerous threat to the country's national security and economic strength. Defense is the largest component of **discretionary spending (https://www.pgpf.org/federal-budget-guide/#discretionary-spending)** and accounts for approximately 13 percent of all federal outlays. In 2024, SIPRI estimated that the United States spent $997 billion on defense — more than the next nine countries combined.

The United States spends more on defense than the next 9 countries combined

Defense Spending (Billions of $)



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute • Embed • Download image

Notes: Figures are in U.S. dollars converted from local currencies using market exchange rates. Data for the United States

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Policy Options

Defense Spending Reform

A strong national defense is crucial to the country's security; however, it should be possible to reform defense spending while meeting national security priorities. **The Coalition for Fiscal and National Security (https://www.pgpf.org/programs-and-projects/coalition-for-fiscal-and-national-security/)** proposed three categories of reform that Congress and the Department of Defense should focus on: eliminating unnecessary or outdated weapons systems, close and realign military facilities, and reassess personnel needs and deployment strategies.

Specific solutions range from simply reducing funding across defense programs to pairing reductions with new national security strategies. Policymakers could also adopt a piecemeal approach by eliminating particular defense programs that are found to be

outdated or unnecessary.

+ **DECREASE THE NUMBER OF FULL-TIME ACTIVE-DUTY FORCES**

+ **CLOSE MILITARY INSTALLATIONS OVERSEAS**

+ **REDUCE SERVICE CONTRACTING**

+ **ELIMINATE IMPROPER PAYMENTS**

+ **SMALLER POLICY OPTIONS TO REDUCE DEFENSE SPENDING**

Additional Defense Resources:

- Congressional Budget Office, **Illustrative Options for National Defense Under a Smaller Defense Budget**
- Government Accountability Office, **Opportunities Exist to Improve DOD's Management of Defense Spending**
- CATO Institute, **National Security Implications of Unsustainable Spending and Debt**



DEFENSE SPENDING

Chart Pack: Defense Spending

(https://www.pgpf.org/article/chart-pack-defense-spending/)



DEFENSE SPENDING

The United States Spends More on Defense than the Next 6 Countries Combined

(https://www.pgpf.org/article/the-united-states-spends-more-on-defense-than-the-next-6-countries-combined/)



DEFENSE SPENDING

Budget Basics: National Defense

(https://www.pgpf.org/article/budget-explainer-national-defense/)

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