

PRESS KIT

LYNX

Estonia



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1. EFP: *Enhanced Forward Presence*

On 9 July 2016 in Warsaw, the heads of state and heads of government of NATO decided to further strengthen the **deterrence and defence posture of the Alliance** in response to the new security environment.

The meeting of NATO defence ministers on 15 and 16 February 2017 confirmed the commitment to establish an **Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP)** in the Baltic states and Poland. This presence consists of **four multinational battalion-sized battlegroups (eFP Battlegroups – eFP BGs)**, each commanded by a framework nation. These four eFP BGs represent a significant contribution to the **collective defence of NATO's eastern flank** as part of a non-escalatory, deterrence posture.

Deployment of the eFP testifies to the **determination of the Allied military forces** to repel any attack on or incursion into Alliance territory. The eFP also demonstrates the **political and military credibility of NATO** and the **high degree of interoperability** of its members.

Since 2017, France has been contributing to the eFP with a joint tactical subgroup ("SGTIA"), which is deployed on a rotating basis in Estonia, as part of a UK-led battlegroup, and in Lithuania, as part of a German-led battlegroup. By engaging **high-level capabilities** and maintaining **continuous operational activity** in the Baltic states, France is demonstrating its commitment to the **reinforcement of the security architecture in Europe**. The French armed forces are playing an active part in NATO's reassurance missions with measured, progressive and rapid response deployments.



French Joint Staff / February 2023



enhanced Forward Presence (eFP)



4 MULTINATIONAL BATTLEGROUPS

United Kingdom

France
Denmark



ESTONIA

Canada

Albania
Czech Republic
Iceland
Italy

Montenegro
Poland
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain



LATVIA

Germany

Belgium
Czech Republic
Luxemburg

Netherlands
Norway



LITHUANIA

United States

Croatia
Romania
United Kingdom



POLAND



FOCUS: French participation in NATO missions

Due to the transformations of the strategic environment and to the diversification of threats over the last ten years, it is of vital importance to maintain the capability to ensure Europe's defence. So, France is working to establish a genuine European Defence Union, in a logic of complementarity with NATO, while remaining an active and committed member of the Alliance Atlantic. Convinced of the need to maintain a reactive Alliance with rapidly deployable and highly interoperable forces, France is playing its part in NATO's operational activities.

During 2022, France took **the lead of the NATO Response Force (NRF)**. Almost **8,000 French troops** were maintained on rapid deployment standby in the NRF's spearhead force, the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force – VJTF).

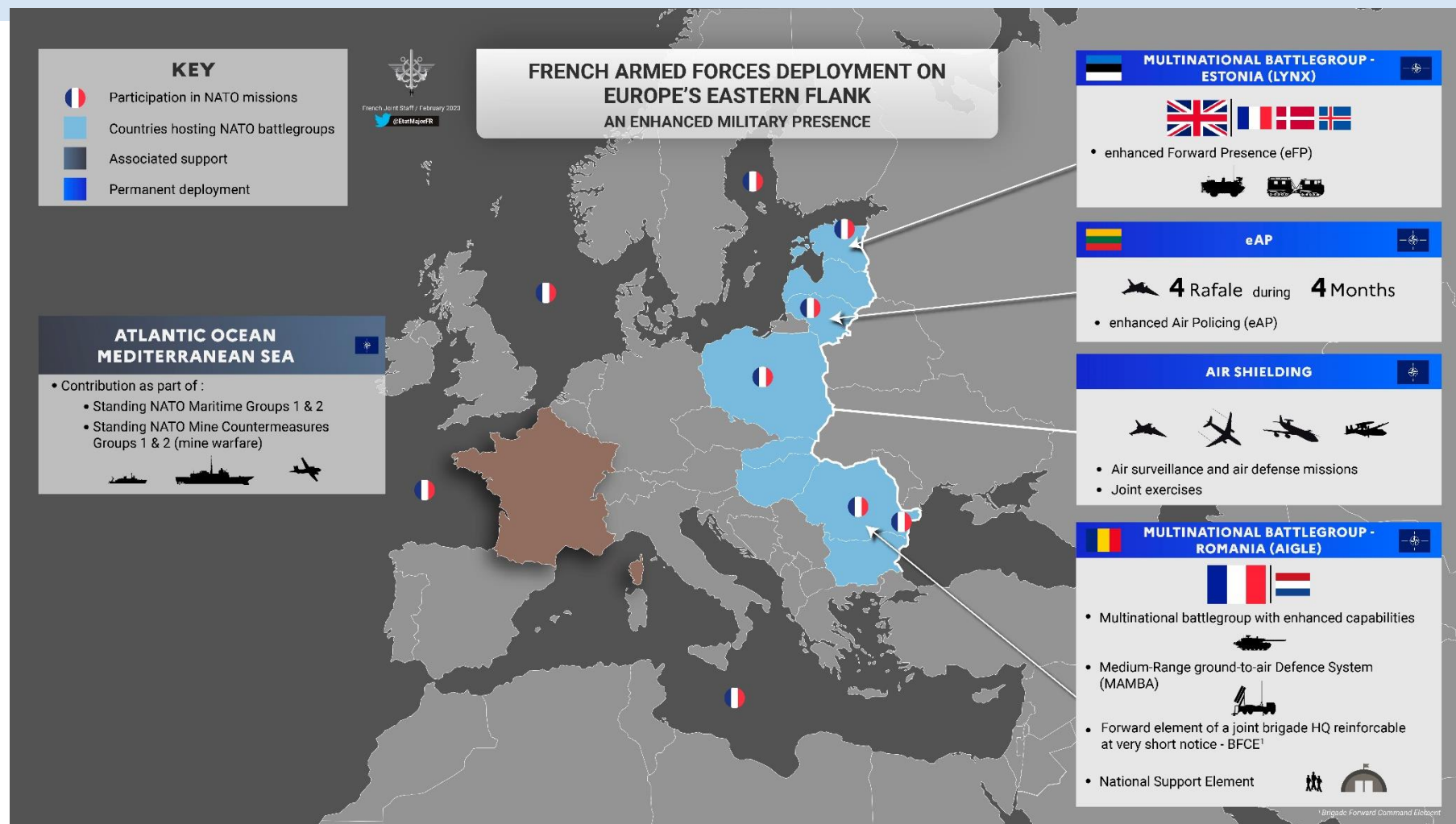
Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, French armed forces have contributed to strengthening NATO's deterrence and defence posture on the Eastern European flank. This major effort implies **reassuring our partners** on NATO's frontiers, **strengthening our engaged capabilities** and **projecting new capabilities**.

France's current military engagements in NATO comprise:

- **Mission AIGLE** in Romania as part of the Collective Defence Battlegroup;
- The **enhanced Air Policing (eAP) mission** in Šiauliai, Lithuania, from 1 December 2022 to 31 March 2023, with 4 Rafale fighter jets carrying out surveillance and air defence missions over the frontiers of the Baltic countries and also above Poland as part of the NATO reinforcement measures;
- **Mission LYNX** as part of the eFP BG in Estonia alongside our British, Danish and Icelandic partners;
- The **"Groupe aéronaval" (GAN) mission** of the French Navy's Carrier Strike Group based on the *Charles De Gaulle* aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean, to reassure our partners and to carry out surveillance and air defence missions over Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia;
- Participation in large-scale international exercises, such as **BRILLIANT JUMP 22** and **COLD RESPONSE 22**.



French armed forces have been deployed continuously in the eFP mission since March 2017. This engagement demonstrates France's **solidarity** with its Baltic partners and, more broadly, its **reliability** and **credibility** as part of NATO.



2. LYNX: the French contribution to eFP



France has played an active part in the eFP in the Baltic states since 2017 with its “Mission LYNX”. It regularly deploys a joint task force (“joint tactical sub-group” - SGTIA). This task force is deployed on a rotating basis to Estonia (2017, 2019, 2021 and 2022), under British command, and Lithuania (2018 and 2020), under German command.

Following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the president of France decided to **maintain France’s participation in the eFP BG in Estonia**. On 17 March 2022, France deployed a light infantry company specialized in harsh-environment attrition warfare.

The **United Kingdom**, with its national Operation CABRIT, is the **framework nation** of eFP BG Estonia and has **authority over the French, Danish and Icelandic troops**. However, this 3-nation battlegroup remains under the command of the Estonian 1st infantry brigade.



The French detachment in eFP BG Estonia



A French senior officer has the role of **Senior National Representative (SNR)** for France at the **eFP headquarters in Tallinn**. He is supported by a small team of French advisers.

French officers have also been assigned to the **staff HQ of eFP BG Estonia** at the Tapa army base.

The French detachment in Estonia currently comprises approximately **300 troops**. It is composed of an infantry tactical sub-group with the logistic support of a **national support element (NSE)** of 100 people.

The NSE consists of a logistic detachment (freight, fuel and vehicle transport), a repair and maintenance detachment, an information and communication systems detachment, a medical unit and a limited staff.

Continued presence of a French task force in eFP BG Estonia

Since 2017, there have been **15 French operational missions in Estonia**. A task force ("SGTIA") has been deployed in the country since 26 March 2021:

- the **first mandate**, LYNX 9, was composed of units from the 2nd armoured brigade (2nd BB), 12th armoured cavalry regiment (based in Olivet), the Régiment de Marche du Tchad (mechanized unit based in Meyenheim), the 13th engineer regiment (based in Valdahon) and 40th artillery regiment (based in Suippes).
- the **second mandate**, LYNX 10, was composed of units from the 2nd BB, 501st battle tank regiment (Mourmelon-le-Grand), 16th mechanized light infantry battalion (Bitche), 13th engineer regiment (Valdahon) and 40th artillery regiment (Suippes).
- the **third mandate**, LYNX 11, was composed of units from the 7th armoured brigade (7th BB), 1st light infantry regiment (Verdun), 35th infantry regiment (Belfort), 3rd engineer regiment (Charleville-Mézières) and 68th artillery regiment (La Valbonne).
- the **fourth mandate**, LYNX 12, consisted entirely of the 5th dragoon regiment of the 7th BB, the only joint forces regiment of the French Army.
- the **fifth mandate**, LYNX 13, comprised a company from the 7th mountain infantry brigade (BCA) of the 27th mountain infantry brigade (27th BIM), specializing in harsh-environment attrition warfare. It was reinforced by the 93rd mountain artillery regiment (RAM).
- the **sixth mandate**, LYNX 14, also consisted of units from the 7th BCA of the 27th BIM.
- the **seventh mandate**, LYNX 15, started in November 2022, comprising units from the 13th BCA of the 27th BIM, supported by the 2nd foreign engineer regiment and the 93rd RAM.





enhanced Forward Presence: LYNX mission

One French company deployed in the British-led battalion in Estonia



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enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup Estonia

United Kingdom

France Denmark Iceland



1 300

whose

300

French

soldiers

Multinational battalion deployed in Tapa
with the United Kingdom as the framework nation

HOST NATION SUPPORT UNIT



Estonia

1st Infantry Brigade
(1. Jalaväebrigade)

MAJOR EQUIPMENT DEPLOYED

UNDER ARMORED GROUP



14 VHM

(High mobility vehicle)



12 VAB

(Armoured personnel carrier)



5 VBL

(Light armoured vehicle)



4 PVP

(Light armoured protected vehicle)



2 EGRAP

(High mobility engineer excavator)



3 PPLOG

(Multi-purpose logistic carrier)



1 TRM 10 000 CLD

(Heavy tactical recovery vehicle)

NATIONAL SUPPORT ECHELON

● Tapa

Estonia

● Adazi

Latvia

Lithuania

● Rukla

Russia

● Orzysz

Poland

Belarus

100 km

Operational readiness activities



The British, Danish, Icelandic and French troops develop their interoperability and maintain their operational capabilities by means of several **joint exercises with the Estonian armed forces**.

These joint and combined Allied exercises demonstrate the **dynamic power of military operational readiness in NATO**. The actions of the Allies are **legitimate**, are conducted with **full transparency** and are **purely defensive in nature**.

