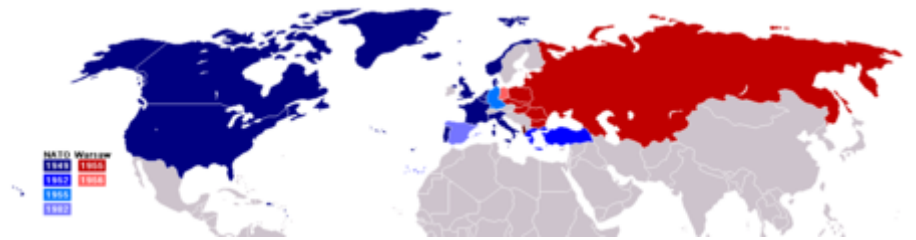


Cold War tank formations

During the Cold War, NATO and the Warsaw Pact both had large tank formations present in Europe.

The following gives the number of armoured formations and tank strength as of 1981/1982 for Warsaw Pact and NATO member countries. These include formations and vehicles deployed outside Europe, such as in North America or the Asiatic USSR.



NATO and the Warsaw Pact

Contents

NATO

- West Germany
- USA
- France
- United Kingdom
- Turkey
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Denmark
- Belgium
- Canada
- Norway
- Portugal
- Greece
- Spain

Warsaw Pact

- USSR
- East Germany
- Poland
- Czechoslovakia
- Bulgaria
- Hungary
- Romania

Other

- Sweden

Footnotes

References

NATO

Grand Total: 30,711+ Tanks

West Germany

German Army Formations

- 6 Tank Divisions (*Panzerdivisionen*)
- 4 Armored Infantry Divisions (*Panzergrenadierdivisionen*)
- 1 Mountain Division (*Gebirgsdivision*)
- 6 Home Defense Tank Brigades (*Heimatschutz – Panzerbrigaden*)
- 6 Home Defense Armored Infantry Brigades (*Heimatschutz – Panzergrenadierbrigaden*) (not complete)

Number of tanks^[1]

<u>MBTs</u>	<u>In reserve</u>	<u>On order</u>	<u>Other</u>
1,200 <u>M48 A2C/A2GA2</u> 2,437 <u>Leopard 1</u> <u>A2/A3/A4</u> 150 <u>Leopard 2</u> 770 <u>Kanonenjagdpanzer</u> 350 <u>Raketenjagdpanzer</u>	-	-	-

Total: 3,787 tanks^[2]

(Total: 4,907 including Jagdpanzer)

USA

Formations

- 4 Tank Divisions
- 6 Mechanized Divisions
- 4 Infantry Divisions
- 1 Airborne Division (incl. 1 Tank Battalion)
- 1 independent Tank Brigade
- 4 independent Infantry Brigades
- 3 Cavalry Regiments (Reconnaissance)
- 3 Tank Battalions Marines
- ? Tank Battalions National Guard (Reserve)

Number of tanks

- 1,825 M48A5 MBT
- 1,555 M60 MBT
- 5,775 M60A1 MBT
- 540 M60A2 MBT
- 1,500 M60A3 MBT
- 150 M1 Abrams MBT
- 400 M551 Sheridan AR/AAV (330 for training purposes)
- 575 M60A1 MBT with the Marines

Total: 12,320 tanks (min. 330 for training only)^[3]

France



Leopard 1 during REFORGER- Exercise 1983



Leopard 2A4



M48 A2C

Formations

- 6 Tank divisions (*divisions blindées*– the 2nd, 7th, 10th in France, the 1st, 3rd and 5th in West Germany)
- 4 Light Armoured Divisions – the 6th, 9th, 12th, 14th
- 2 Mechanised Infantry Divisions – the 8th and 15th

Number of tanks^[4]

MBTs	In reserve	On order	Other
1,259 <u>AMX 30</u>	-	145 <u>AMX 30</u>	340 <u>AMX 13</u> light tanks

Total: 1,868 tanks^[5]



A M60A3 in Langgöns, Germany

United Kingdom

Formations

- 3 Armoured divisions (1st, 3rd and 4th) as part of the BAOR



M1A1



AMX-30

Number of tanks^[6]

Tanks	In reserve	On order	Other
900 <u>FV4201 Chieftain MBT</u> (60 in Reserve)	300 <u>Centurion MBT</u> stored	240 <u>FV4030/4 Challenger MBT</u>	271 tracked armoured reconnaissance vehicles (<u>FV101 Scorpion</u> and <u>Scimitar</u>)

Total: 1,901 tanks and armored cars^[7]

Before the 1980s

Earlier units included the Conqueror tank (1955–1966) and FV4101 Charioteer (TA 1950s). Initially containing 3 armoured divisions, the BAOR was reformed by 1960 into 3 mixed divisions and additional brigade groups. Then in the 1970s, as 4 smaller armoured divisions before reorganization as 3 armoured divisions in 1981–83.

Turkey

As of 1981/83:

Formations

- 1 Tank Division
- 2 Mechanised Infantry Divisions
- 14 Infantry Divisions (some with tank battalions attached)

Number of tanks^[8]

MBT	In reserve	On order	Other
3,000 <u>M48 Patton</u> 500 <u>M47 Patton</u>	-	70 <u>Leopard 1A3</u> MBT	-

Total: 3,570 Tanks^[9]

Italy

As of 1981/82:

Formations

- 4 Tank Brigades^[10] (three tank battalion each)
- 9 Mechanised Brigades^[11] (one tank battalion each)
- 5 Motorised Brigades^[12] (one mixed tank-mechanized battalion each)

Number of tanks

- 920 MBT Leopard 1
- 300 MBT M60A1
- 550 MBT M47 Patton (remaining of original 1,500)

Total: 1,620 tanks^[13]

Netherlands

As of 1981/82:

Formations

- 1 armoured division
- 2 mechanised divisions (1 of which reserve)

Number of Tanks

- 468 MBT Leopard 1
- 343 MBT Centurion tank



FV4201 Chieftain



Leopard 1



M-47 Patton I

- 113 light tank AMX 13/105

Total: 924 tanks

Denmark

As of 1983:

Formations

- 1 Mechanised Division (Jutland)
- 1 Light Battlegroup (Jutland)
- 2 Independent Mechanised Brigades (Zealand)
- 4 Light Battlegroups (Zealand)
- 1 Battlegroup (Bornholm)

Number of Tanks

Jutland

- 120 MBT Leopard 1A3 (40 in each Brigade x3)
- 18 light tank M41 Walker Bulldog (Recon Battalion)
- 48 Centurion tank Mk.V with 84 mm gun (6x Anti-tank Squadrons in reserve(in four regions and one Light-Battlegroupe)

Zealand

- 80 MBT Centurion tank MK.V2 with 105 mm L7A1 gun (40 in each Brigade x2)
- 32 Centurion tank MK.V with 84 mm gun (4x Anti-tank Squadrons in Light-Battlegroups)
- 18 light tank M41 Walker Bulldog (Recon Battalion)

Bornholm

- 16 light tank M41 Walker Bulldog (1 Light Tank Squadron and 1 Recon Squadron)
- 12 Centurion tank MK.V with 84 mm gun (Anti-tank Squadron in reserve)

Storage

- 26 MBT Centurion tank MK.V2 with 105 mm L7A1 gun
- 18 Centurion tank MK.V with 84 mm gun

Total: 388 tanks

Belgium

As of 1981/82:

Formations

- 2 Armoured Brigades
- 2 Mechanised Brigades
- 1 Reserve Mechanised Brigade

Number of tanks

- 334 MBT Leopard 1
- 62 MBT M47 Patton (reserve)
- 136 light tank FV101 Scorpion
- 154 light tank FV107 Scimitar
- light tank AMX-13

- 80 light tank Kanonenjagdpanzer

Total: 766+ tanks

Canada

As of 1981/82:

Formations

- 1 Mechanized Brigade (~~4~~ Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group based in Germany)
- 2 Motorized Brigades (~~1~~ Canadian Brigade Group and 5e Groupe-brigade du Canada both based in Canada with NATO taskings to Europe. 1CBG provided personnel for REFORGER and 5GBC as the CAST Canadian Air-Sea Transportable Brigade Group earmarked for service in Norway).
- 114 MBT Leopard 1
- 195 AVGP Cougar (amphibious, direct Fire Support Vehicle (Wheeled) FSV(W) variant of the Canadian built Armoured Vehicle General Purpose AVGP based on the Swiss MOVAG 6X6 Piranaha hull with 76 mm gun in British FV101 Scorpion Tank Turret).

The Leopards and Cougars came into service in the late 1970s and replaced 274 Centurion Tanks used by Royal Canadian Armoured Corps units (The Canadian Centurion tanks served in Germany for 25 years, from January 1952 to January 1977).

Total: 114 MBT (+195 FSV) = 309 tanks

Norway

As of 1981/82:

Formations

- Independent Armoured Squadrons

Number of tanks

- 78 MBT Leopard 1
- 38 MBT M48 Patton
- 70 light tank NM-116 (upgraded M24 Chaffee)

Total: 186 tanks

Portugal

As of 1981/82:

Formations

- 1 Tank Regiment
- 2 Cavalry Regiments

Number of tanks

- 34 MBT M47 Patton
- 30 MBT M48 Patton
- light tank M24 Chaffee

Total: 64+ tanks

Greece

As of 1981/82:

Formations

- 1 Armoured Division
- 2 Independent Armoured Brigades

Number of tanks^[14]

MBT	In reserve	On order	Other
170 <u>AMX 30</u> 800 <u>M48 Patton</u> 150 <u>M47 Patton</u> 190 <u>M24 Chaffee</u>	-		-

Total: 1,310 tanks

Spain

Members of NATO from 30 May 1982:

Formations

- 1 Armoured Division
- 1 Mechanised Division
- 3 Armoured Cavalry Brigades
- 1 Light Cavalry Regiment

Number of tanks

- 340 MBT M47 Patton
- 110 MBT M48 Patton
- 200 MBT AMX-30
- 180 light tank M41 Walker Bulldog

Total: 830 tanks



An M48 Patton tank of the Spanish Army on display at the *El Goloso* Museum of Armored Vehicles

Warsaw Pact

Grand Total: 71,700+ Tanks

USSR

Formations

As of 1981/82 the Soviet Ground Forces had:

- 46 Tank Divisions, including six Tank Armies with four tank divisions each.
- 119 Mechanised Infantry Divisions
- 6 Airborne Divisions
- 1 Naval Infantry Division
- 3 Naval Infantry Brigades

Tank strength



T-62

- 45,000 MBT JS-2 and JS-3 (Reserve) T-10 / T-10M / T-54 / T-55 / T-62
- 10,000 MBT T-64 / T-72 / T-80
- 870 amphibious Reconnaissance tanks PT-76 (*Plavayushchiy Tank*)
- 1,800 med. tank T-34 (At the Chinese border – most used for driver training; withdrawn in 1979)

Total: 57,670 tanks^[15]

East Germany

As of 1981/82:

Formations

- 2 Tank Division
- 4 Mechanised Infantry Divisions

Number of tanks

- 1,500 MBT T-54 / T-55 / T-72 (further 1600 tanks stored)
- 120 Reconnaissance tanks PT-76

Total: 1,620+ tanks^[16]

Poland

As of 1981/82:

Formations

- 5 Tank Divisions
- 8 Mechanised Infantry Divisions
- 1 Amphibious Assault Division
- 1 Airborne Division

Number of Tanks

- 3,400 T-54 / T-55 MBT
- 30 T-72 MBT
- 130 PT-76 Armored Reconnaissance tanks

Total: 4,010 tanks^[17]

Czechoslovakia

As of 1980

Formations

- 7 Tank Divisions (2 on full numbers, 3 on reduced numbers, 2 created by mobilization)
- 8 Motor-Rifle Divisions (3 on full numbers, 2 on reduced numbers, 3 created by mobilization)

Number of Tanks as of year 1980

- 31 T-72



T-64B



T-72



T-80B



Polish T-55

- 1,960 T-55
- 1,804 T-54
- 428 T-34

Total in 1980: 4,223 tanks^[18]

Bulgaria

As of 1981/82

Formations

- 5 Tank Brigades (in Sofia, Kazanlak, Karlovo Sliven and Aytos)
- 8 Motor Rifle Divisions

Number of Tanks

- 1,800 MBT T-54 / T-55
- 250 MBT T-62
- 100 med. tank T-34
- 250 light tank PT-76

Total: 2,400 tanks

Hungary

As of 1981/82

Formations

- 1 Tank Division
- 5 Motor Rifle Divisions

Number of Tanks

- 1,000 MBT T-54 / T-55
- 100 light tank PT-76

Total: 1,100 tanks

Romania

As of 1981/82

Formations

- 2 Tank Divisions
- 8 Motor Rifle Divisions

Number of Tanks

- 1,300 MBT T-54 / T-55
- 200 med. tank T-34

Total: 1,500 tanks

Other



PT-76 amphibious tank

Sweden

As of ca 1980

Formations

- 4 Armoured Brigades, type PB 63
- 1 Armoured Brigade, type Gotland^[19]
- 1 Mechanized Brigade, type MekB 10 (under development)
- 1 Independent Armoured Battalion, I 19/P 5^[20]

Number of tanks

- 240 MBT Stridsvagn 103 (72 per brigade, plus an independent battalion with 24)
- 192 MBT Centurion (72 per brigade, plus a future mechanized brigade with 48)^[21]

The Swedish army was in the process of forming a mechanized brigade, type MekB 10, which became active in 1983/84.^[22] This brigade was only equipped with 48 MBT's (Centurions) compared to the 72 MBT's of the regular armoured brigades, but instead received 24 Infanterikanonvagn 91 infantry support vehicles.^[23]

Total: 432 tanks

Footnotes

1. Armed Forces 1981/82 Page 73
2. Armed Forces 1981/82 Page 73
3. Armed Forces 1981/82. Page 20
4. Armed Forces 1981/82 Page 76
5. Armed Forces 1981/82 Page 76
6. Armed Forces 1981/82 Page 84
7. Armed Forces 1981/82 Page 84
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