



The National Armed Forces

FOUNDATION DATE

10 July 1919. Unified Latvian army was created after merging South Latvia Independent Brigade led by Colonel Jānis Balodis and North Latvia Brigade under command of Colonel Jorģis Zemitāns.

National Armed Forces were formed on 24 November 1994 when Defence Force was combined with National Guard of the Republic of Latvia.

STATUS

Structure, tasks, command, funding and control model of National Armed Forces are set out in the National Armed Forces Law, whereas uniform military service requirements are stipulated by Military Service Law.

AIM

to protect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and population of Latvia from an aggression.

MAIN TASKS

Protection of Latvia's land, sea and air from possible attacks, participation in international missions and ensuring of national security against various threats according to regulatory requirements.

Cabinet of Ministers may formally engage National Armed Forces in other emergency operations.

RECRUITING

Regular force of National Armed Forces became a standing army on 1 January 2007. Any citizen of Latvia who has turned 18 can enrol in professional army and become a troop. In a time of piece, military personnel is made up of professional troops employed by army on contract basis, National Guard, civilian support staff and reserve force that engages in regular training or testing.

STRUCTURE

National Armed Forces integrate different military branches formed of well-organised, trained and armed men and women serving in regular forces, National Guard and National Armed Forces Reserve. Regular Forces include Land Force Mechanised Infantry Brigade, Navy, Air Force, Training and Doctrine Command, Support Command, Military Police, Special Operations

Command and Staff Battalion. There are four National Guard brigades. National Guard operates under single command. Chief of National Guard reports directly to the Chief of the Defence Staff. Citizens of Latvia can enlist for military service and join the National Armed Force Reserve.

COMMAND

Chief of the Defence Staff reporting directly to Defence Minister. President of Latvia is Commander-in-Chief of the National Armed Forces.

COOPERATION

National Armed Forces work in close conjunction with government, local and private entities. Role of National Armed Forces in emergency, fire, rescue operations and disaster relief is regulated by Cabinet of Ministers. Defence Minister may request National Armed Forces to provide support to civil protection.

CONTROL

Civilian control of National Armed Forces is assured by Defence Minister, State Audit Office, Cabinet of Ministers, President of Latvia and Saeima (Parliament) within their scope of competence. Internal control processes are assured by Chief of the Defence Staff.

MILITARY PERSONNEL (2020)

6,000 army troops and 8,300 National Guard troops.

DEFENCE BUDGET

2019: EUR 636,704,499; 2020: EUR 663,666,724.

NATO ENHANCED FORWARD PRESENCE

To promote Alliance's deterrence policy and strengthen its collective defence, NATO officially launched a multi-national enhanced forward presence battle group Latvia on 19 June 2017. Battle group led by Canada consists of more than 1,400 troops from Albania, Czech Republic, Italy, Poland, Canada, Slovakia, Slovenia, Montenegro and Spain. Troops of these countries are deployed to Latvia on rotational basis and engage in joint training with National Armed Forces to improve interoperability with regional allies and response to various kinds of security threats.

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS SINCE 1996:

1996-2004	IFOR, SFOR	Bosnia and Herzegovina
1999	AFOR	Albania
1999-2005	OSCE (EDSO)	Macedonia, Georgia
2008-2009	OSCE	North Macedonia, Georgia
2000-2009	KFOR	Kosovo
2003-2008	OIF	Iraq
2003-2009	EU Althea	Bosnia and Herzegovina
2003-2014	ISAF	Afghanistan
2014	EUFOR RCA	Central African Republic
2011-2019	EU NAVFOR ATALANTA	Coastline of Somalia
2015-2020	EU NAVFOR Med Sophia	Italy
2016-2020	INHERENT RESOLVE	Iraq
2013-2020	EU TM Mali	Mali
2015-2020	RESOLUTE SUPPORT	Afghanistan
2016-2020	ANO MALI MINUSIMA	Mali
2020-2020	EU NAVFOR Med IRINI	Italy

PARTICIPATION IN NATO RESPONSE FORCE (NRF) MISSIONS SINCE 2006:

eNRF 2015: 82 troops (45 troops, Navy vessel; 37 troops, Military Police)

eNRF 2016: 527 troops (140 troops, Infantry company; 65 troops, Special operations unit; 45 troops, Navy vessel; 37 troops, Military Police platoon; 240 troops, BALTBAT units)

eNRF 2017: 234 troops (160 troops, Infantry company; 20 troops, Special operations unit; 54 troops, Navy vessel)

eNRF 2018: 305 troops (160 troops, Infantry company; 60 troops, Special operations unit; 45 troops, Navy vessel; 47 troops, Military engineering)

eNRF 2019: 225 troops (120 troops, Infantry company; 20 troops, Special operations unit; 45 troops, Navy vessel; 40 troops, Military engineering platoon)

eNRF 2020: 705 troops (120 troops, Infantry company; 26 troops, Infantry platoon; 20 troops, Special operations unit; 2 troops, Special operations unit; 47 troops, Navy vessel; 40 troops, Military engineering platoon; 450 troops, BALTBAT units)

PARTICIPATION IN THE UK-LED JOINT EXPEDITION FORCE (JEF):

2019: 120 troops (infantry company)

2020: 120 troops (infantry company)

PARTICIPATION IN EU BATTLE GROUP (EUBG) SINCE 2010:

UK-led EUBG 2016/2: 103 NAF/National Guard troops (infantry company, experts, headquarters staff)

Germany-led EUBG 2020/2: 9 National Guard troops (experts)