

# In about a hundred words on NATO's Eastern Flank

The events of February 24th, 2022, and the following 15 months of Russia's war on Ukraine, have rocked the foundations of European security. With norms shattered, both NATO and Allied policymakers are taking steps to project deterrence and dissuade future aggression, notably along NATO's Eastern Flank.

With the Vilnius Summit due to take place in a week's time, GLOBSEC asks experts from its Future Security and Defence Council; *What concrete steps can be taken quickly by Allies to ensure NATO's Eastern flank is battle-ready?*



**Dr. Sc. Mirko Šundov**

Retired General; Advisor to the Board, DOK-ING

The individuals who will win the critical battles of the 21st century are not those who have mastered the processes and concepts of last century, or even of the present time. They are ones who will be able to look into the intense competition (particularly in the economic and defence domains) already arising in our world, and in future conflicts. We need people to think in new ways and see new opportunities, which can conceptualise, innovate and create winning solutions. It would be comforting to think that the human factor, which has always been a vital component in past wars, will still count decisively in the future. In this sense, it is necessary to invest in people, their competencies (knowledge, abilities and skills) through education and training both at the political and military level, through individual education, as well as common and joint training and exercises.



**General (Retired) Pavel Macko**

Security Expert

In reaction to the annexation of Crimea by Russia, NATO implemented the Readiness Action Plan followed by establishment of the set of NFIUs and enhanced forward presence. The situation has changed, and NATO must react robustly. On the Eastern flank, we must adopt a forward defense posture with the permanent stationing of a credible allied force that is ready to fight. Nations on the Eastern flank must speed up development, equipment, and training of all elements of the force. In addition, we can invest in robust host nation support and industry capabilities, consider substantial repositioning of the equipment and stocks, improve military mobility, and introduce intensive training for the combined forces.



**Marcin Zaborowski**

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First of all, we must draw the right lessons from the past. The West won the Cold War without firing a shot. The Soviet Union did not dare to attack any of the NATO countries because Western deterrence was credible, based on significant investments in defense capabilities, allied troops, and the presence of nuclear forces in the flank nations. Today, to prevent the extension of Russia's hostility to NATO's territory, we need to make our deterrence credible once again. This requires major and coordinated defense investments from all NATO member states, as well as the ramping up of allied presence, including nuclear forces, on the East flank of the Alliance.