



LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ARMED FORCES

2025—2036

WHITE PAPER



CONTENTS

Threat description	3
Development of the National Armed Forces	4
Breakdown of funding across the 12-year period from 2025 to 2036	
Breakdown of funding across the 4-year period from 2025 to 2028	4
Medium term	5
Land Forces	7
Maritime Forces	8
Air Force	9
Logistics and support capabilities	10
Innovations and technologies	10
Support for Ukraine	11
Personnel and structure of NAF	12
Future NAF structure	13
Public participation	14
Budget	15
Budget breakdown 2025 - 2036	15
Border reinforcement	16
30-km border area	16
Infrastructure	17
REGIONAL NAF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS	18



THREAT DESCRIPTION

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has irrevocably altered Europe's security landscape. The outcome of this conflict will shape the region's future security framework. Russia, drawing lessons from the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, will restructure its armed forces to increase personnel and deploy new heavily armed units along the Latvian border. Russia will continue to use military means to achieve its political objectives and its military capability development plans are aligned with an aggressive foreign policy that supports Russia's expansionist and imperialist aspirations.

Russia is expected to significantly expand its military-industrial complex capacity over the next five years to meet the increasing demands of its armed forces for weapons, ammunition, and vehicles. The primary focus will be on quantity and firepower. This will likely contribute to sustained regional security tensions in the medium to long term, with Russia remaining the primary threat to Latvia. In 2023, Latvia adopted a new National Defence Concept in response to evolving geopolitical challenges. The Concept states that the National Armed Forces (NAF) must defend the territory of Latvia and its civilian population from the very first centimeter, using all appropriate and available resources to prevent the enemy from invading and gaining control over Latvian territory.

The NAF Development Plan for 2025-2036, developed by the Ministry of Defence, outlines how bolstering national and allied deterrence and defence capabilities in the medium and long term will achieve this objective.

NATO membership is the cornerstone of Latvia's defence. It provides collective defence assurances that are crucial for defending every centimeter of Latvian territory alongside allied troops. Latvia will continue to develop its infrastructure and conduct joint military training and exercises to guarantee the presence of allied forces at all times. Regional defence plans, adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Vilnius, will ensure that NATO can rapidly and effectively deploy its forces to counter any military aggression, whether it occurs on land, sea, air, in space, or in cyberspace. NAF capability development initiatives support NATO's regional defence plans by providing the required military units and capabilities.

The NAF Development Plan 2025-2036 serves as the cornerstone for the long-term development of Latvia's defence capabilities, thus strengthening the security of Latvia's territory and population while enhancing the civilian functions of the defence sector.

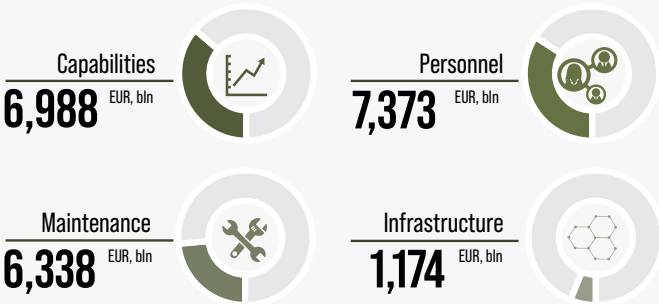


DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ARMED FORCES

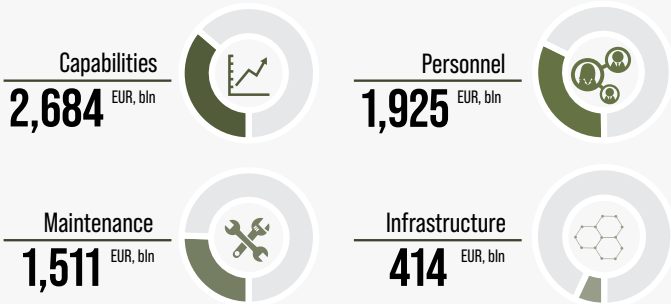
The NAF Development Plan 2025-2036 outlines a long-term vision for military development, aligning capability priorities with current and potential threat scenarios. A key prerequisite for the successful implementation of the NAF Development Plan is reaching a force size of 61 000 soldiers. NAF's peace-time structure will be increased to 31 000 soldiers with an additional 30 000 soldiers in general reserve. NAF's structural expansion will mainly happen through the enhanced integration of National Defence Service soldiers into existing NAF units, and through the establishment of new units. In accordance with the Financing National Defence law, the long-term defence budget will stay above 3% of the projected GDP.

Additional defence funding will boost the development of defence capabilities. A particular emphasis will be placed on improving combat readiness, thus building firepower and increasing the effective range, restricting enemy movement in air, at sea and on land. Over the course of the next 12 years, nearly €7 billion will be allocated to investments in defence capabilities, whereas infrastructure development costs will range around 1 billion euros.

BREAKDOWN OF FUNDING ACROSS THE 12-YEAR PERIOD 2025 – 2036



BREAKDOWN OF FUNDING ACROSS THE 4-YEAR PERIOD 2025 – 2028





MEDIUM TERM

NAF capability development will require substantial investments in the medium term with particular focus on building combat and combat service capabilities. €650 million will be invested into a layered air defence system, which will enable NAF to defend the territory, population and critical infrastructure of Latvia against enemy drones, helicopters, planes, missiles and other aerial threats similar to those faced by Ukraine. A €250 million investment will be made for the procurement of new infantry fighting vehicles which will strengthen the mobility and survivability, as well as increase the firepower of the mechanized infantry brigade. €80 million is programmed for the implementation of specialized next-generation unmanned aerial vehicles. €300 million will be allocated to further develop indirect fire support capabilities, including the acquisition of High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) and the procurement and fielding of wheeled self-propelled artillery systems. €500 million will be invested in upgrading the NAF logistics system, particularly in stockpiling ammunition, food, and individual and collective equipment. Additionally, €200 million will be allocated over the next four years to develop force enablers, combat service and combat service support capabilities, including combat engineering, command and control, cyber defence, medical support, CBRN defence, and strategic communication.

In order to ensure total defence starting from the first centimetre, the NAF Development Plan prioritizes the reinforcement of Latvia's eastern border using military-technical means and allocating €303 million.

NATO allies will continue to play a crucial role in strengthening Latvia's defence and deterrence posture. For example, Enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Latvia will be upgraded to a brigade level. In addition, funds have been allocated for infrastructure development to support the further development of NAF's defence capabilities and host nation support capabilities. Infrastructure development will include but will not be limited to a new military training area (Selonia Military Training Area), barracks, and support infrastructure. The 25,000-hectare Training Area will have the capacity to accommodate brigade-level military exercises. The training area will be used by NAF units, including National Defence Service units and NATO allies.

By continuously developing land, air, naval, logistics, and enabling capabilities, and rapidly integrating innovative high-tech solutions, NAF will be able to adapt to the current security environment and meet the challenges posed by various threats. Capability development priorities are informed by lessons learned from the conflict in Ukraine.

NATIONAL ARMED FORCES

LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT 2025 – 2036

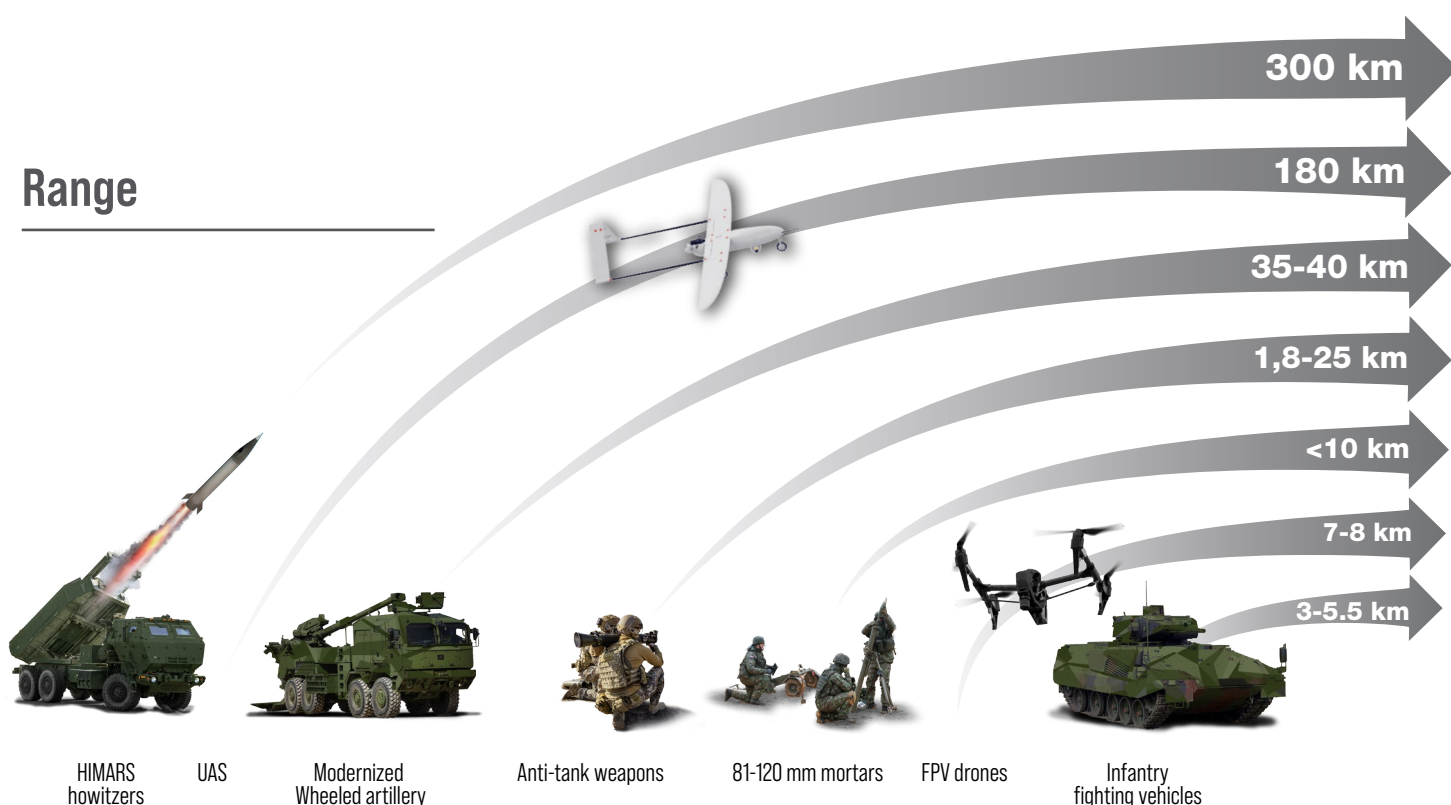


LAND FORCES

The Land Forces of NAF consist of the Mechanized Infantry Brigade (MIB) and the National Guard (NG). Mid-term development of the MIB will specifically focus on further mechanization, i.e., introduction of new infantry fighting vehicle platforms. These platforms will increase the MIB's firepower, as well as enhance mobility and survivability. Anti-tank weapons will ensure the capability to engage targets both directly and indirectly, leveraging line-of-sight and non-line-of-sight targeting methods. The NAF Development Plan includes the establishment of a fourth MIB manoeuvre battalion as a high-readiness reserve unit. Additionally, the MIB will be equipped with various types of UAVs to enhance reconnaissance, surveillance, fire correction, resupply, and other capabilities. Forces and infrastructure will be protected by additional air defence systems. The procurement of new combat engineering equipment will enhance both unit mobility across diverse terrains and counter-mobility capabilities through the deployment of additional explosive and non-explosive obstacles (including placing barriers, laying mines, and controlled demolitions). The mine-laying capacity will be upgraded through the acquisition of automated truck-mounted mine-laying systems. The MIB also requires the development of combat support and combat service support, command and control, reconnaissance, and medical support.

The development of the Land Forces also foresees the upgrading of the largest and most widespread NAF force, the NG, which serves as a crucial tool for direct public involvement in national defence. The NG will be expanded by establishing four new high-readiness reserve battalions, one in each NG Brigade. Wheeled self-propelled artillery systems, armoured personnel carriers, and anti-tank systems will reinforce the NG in the medium term accordingly to the adopted Development Plan. This will enhance the mobility of NG units, improve their defence capabilities and firepower, bringing them to modern military and warfare standards. The NG will integrate various UAV systems, develop air defence, military engineering, command and control, and medical support capabilities. In addition, the NG medium term development plan envisions further development of the existing Special Psychological Operations Section and National Guard 1st brigade Riga CBRN company. The NG Cyber Defence Unit will serve as a foundation for battalion-level units that integrate electromagnetic warfare assets and cyber defence capabilities.

Range



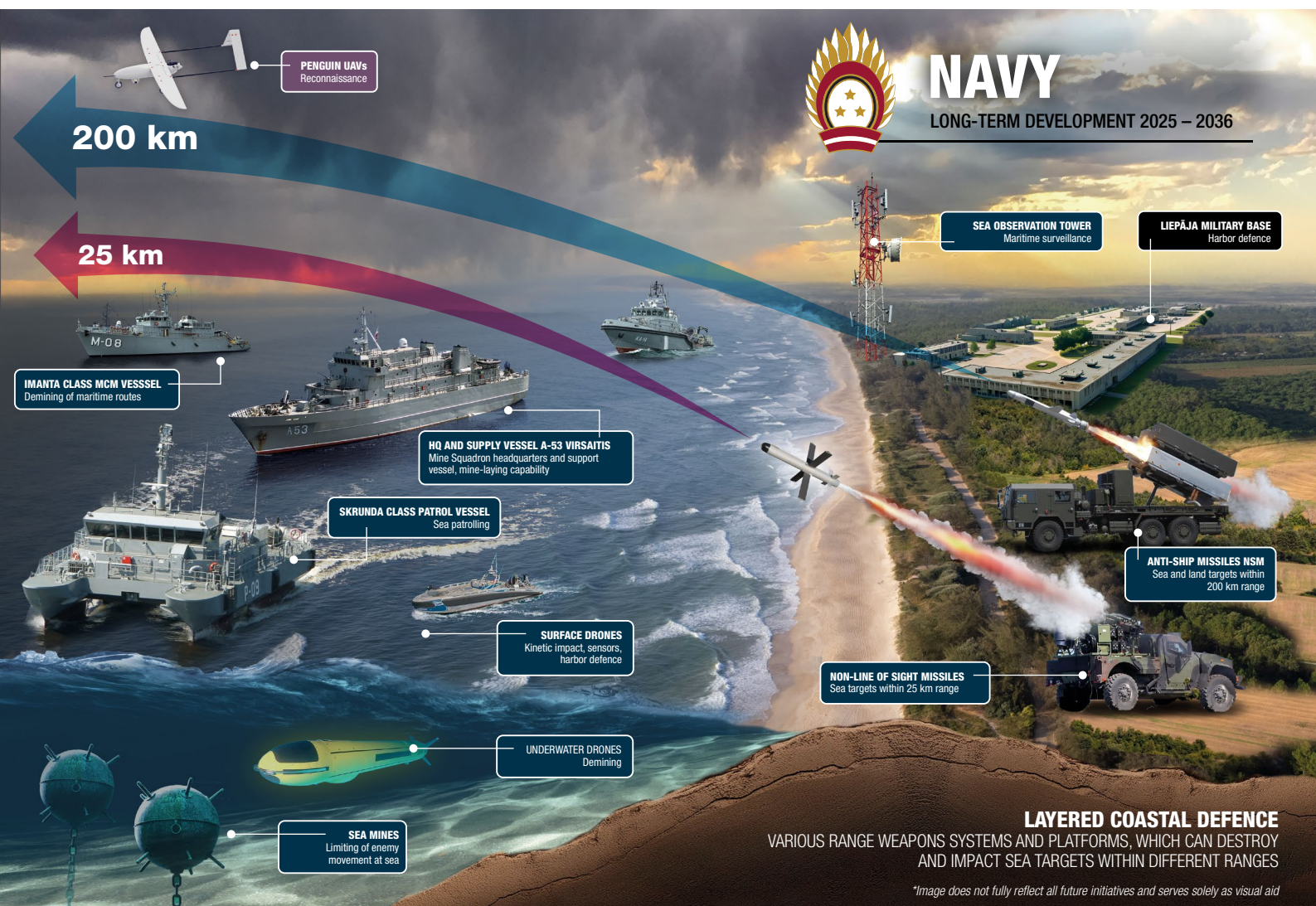
MARITIME FORCES

Continuous development of the Navy is crucial for Latvia's ability to counter threats in maritime domain. NAF will enhance its firepower and extend its range by introducing long-range and short-range anti-ship missile systems. This capability will enable NAF to engage and destroy targets at sea, both within visual range and beyond the horizon. Further development of sea surveillance capabilities will enhance target detection and acquisition and improve the monitoring and control of territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone. The expansion of the Latvian Navy also includes establishing new units that integrate air defence systems and missile systems of various ranges, thus contributing to layered coastal defence. In addition, vital underwater infrastructure and harbour defence capabilities will also be strengthened.

The Maritime Forces (MF) will boost countermine warfare capabilities and develop national shipping lane access procedures, contributing to NATO's permanent sea force and sea mine neutralization efforts.

The MF will adapt existing platforms to boost mine-laying capabilities and continue modernization of the counter-mine combat fleet to ensure efficient demining of territorial waters as part of broader efforts to strengthen control over Latvia's territorial waters. The introduction of new and innovative technologies, such as new autonomous air, surface, and underwater unmanned systems, coupled with total control of territorial waters, will be one of the key capability development objectives.

Upgrade of the Liepāja Military port is also critical for ensuring allied forces easy access to Latvian land for the delivery of personnel and other resources via sea. NATO funding will allow the construction of new berths and other auxiliary infrastructure. In addition, the dredging of shipping lanes will improve the capacity to harbour allied ships.

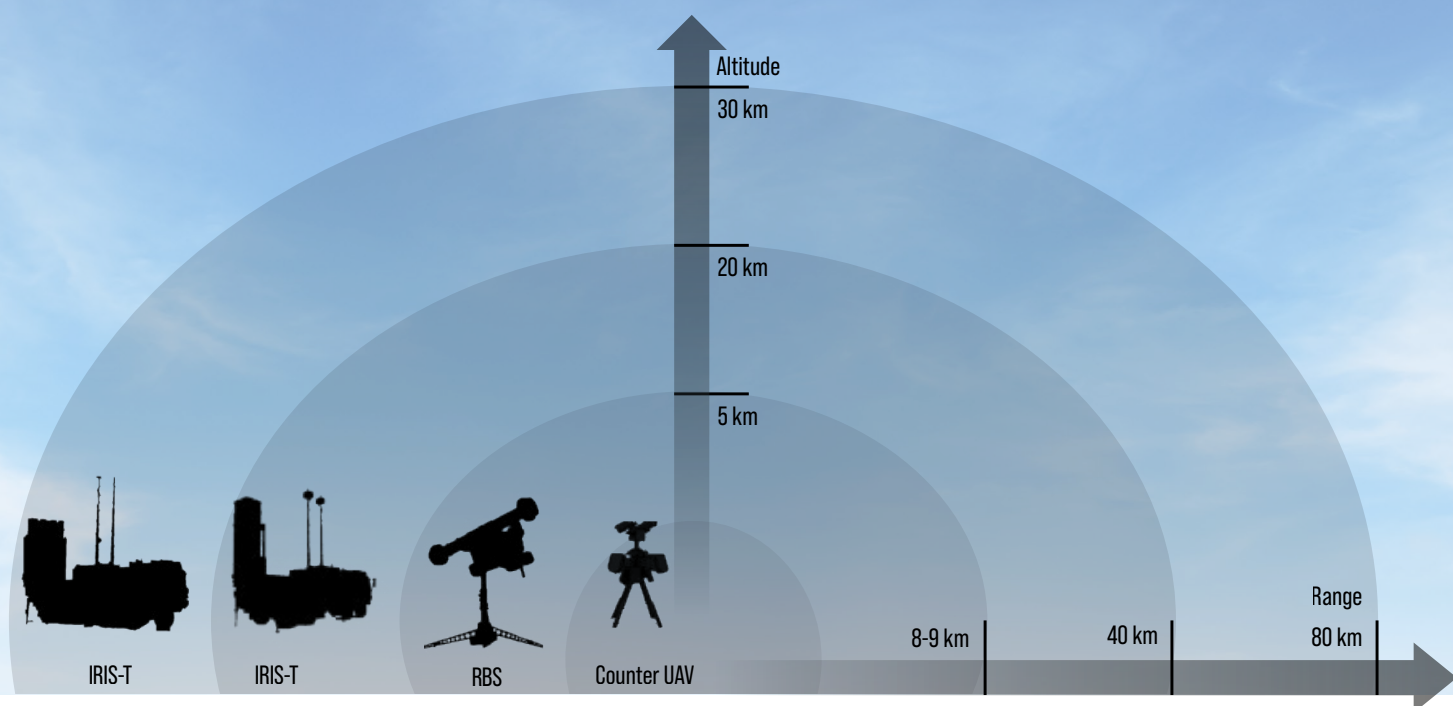


AIR FORCE

The NAF Development Plan includes the further development of the Air Force (AF). A key priority for capability development will be the establishment of a layered air defence system to ensure the safety, control, and integrity of Latvian airspace. This will require introducing medium-range air defence systems, modernizing short-range air defence systems, deploying new counter-UAV technologies, and enhancing airspace surveillance and control capabilities. Layered air defence capability development foresees the establishment of several air battlegroups, integrated into Air, Land, and Naval units.

The ultimate goal is to safeguard the population and critical infrastructure from various aerial threats.

Development of the AF also includes the continued development of tactical air lift (helicopter) capabilities. The introduction of UH-60M Black Hawk and MD-530F helicopters will be crucial for further development of the AF fleet. These helicopters will be employed for civilian search and rescue operations and provide support to NAF and allied military units deployed to Latvia during various operations.



Given the increasing role of drones in modern military operations, the NAF Development Plan stresses the importance of employing UAVs to enhance NAF's capabilities. The further development of UAV capabilities will facilitate the integration of air, land, and sea unmanned systems into NAF. Due to their versatility in reconnaissance, defence, attack, and logistics, drones are expected to significantly strengthen the efficiency of NAF's combat capabilities.

LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY

One of the prerequisites for efficient combat capability development is the development of logistics capabilities, namely the supply of modern individual equipment, ammunition, food, vehicles (including logistics vehicles), weapon systems, optical devices and collective equipment for NAF. To mitigate the impact of potential global supply chain disruptions, NAF must prioritize the continued strategic stockpiling of critical resources and equipment. In light of NATO's guidelines and the experiences of the war in Ukraine, the NAF Development Plan emphasizes the stockpiling of battle decisive munitions.

The development of logistics and supply capabilities relies on the involvement of the national defence industry.

The development of logistics and supply capabilities is not restricted to any particular unit of NAF and is linked to NAF's capability to fulfil its functions. Developing reconnaissance, command and control, medical support, CBRN defence, strategic communication, and other capabilities is essential for NAF to conduct a full spectrum of operations. It also aligns with NATO's and the EU's capability development targets, strengthening the compatibility and interoperability of NAF units with allied forces.

INNOVATIONS AND TECHNOLOGIES

The wide use of disruptive technologies is a vital component of NAF's development. A significant part of funding will be allocated to the integration of UAVs into NAF, ensuring it remains at the forefront of modern warfare. The enhancement of electromagnetic combat capabilities is essential to deter the employment of drones by potential adversaries. Additionally, bolstering cyber defence and cybersecurity capabilities over the next 12 years is important to establish defence against all types of digital threats.

Research and development (R&D) will play an important role in the introduction of innovations and technologies.

Over the next four years, approximately 32 million euros will be invested in R&D activities. Key R&D priorities for the defence sector include artificial intelligence and machine learning, cyber defence and information and communication technologies, autonomous systems, next generation communication systems, biotechnologies and smart materials, quantum technologies and space capabilities. Priority R&D areas require close cooperation with local businesses, academia and independent research institutions. The sector is currently developing a defence innovation strategy which will outline specific priorities and activities to be implemented in the near future.



SUPPORT TO UKRAINE

To safeguard European security and stability, it is imperative that Ukraine prevails in its fight against Russian military aggression. As such, the NAF's long-term development plan is rooted in the provision of continuous political and military aid to Ukraine to secure its victory. Latvia will continue to support Ukraine and allocate 0.25% of its GDP every year over the course of the next three years. This funding will be invested in training Ukrainian military personnel, transferring various military resources and equipment, as well as investing into Drone Coalition initiatives.

Considering the current trends in modern warfare, Latvia prioritizes the transfer of various types of unmanned aerial vehicles to Ukraine.

For this reason, Latvia proposed the establishment of the Drone Coalition in 2024. This multinational support initiative for Ukraine aims to ensure a steady supply of drones to Ukraine, promote the development of safe drone component supply chains in Western countries, foster the growth of drone manufacturing in allied facilities and upgrade drone capabilities in allied nations.



PERSONNEL AND STRUCTURE OF NAF

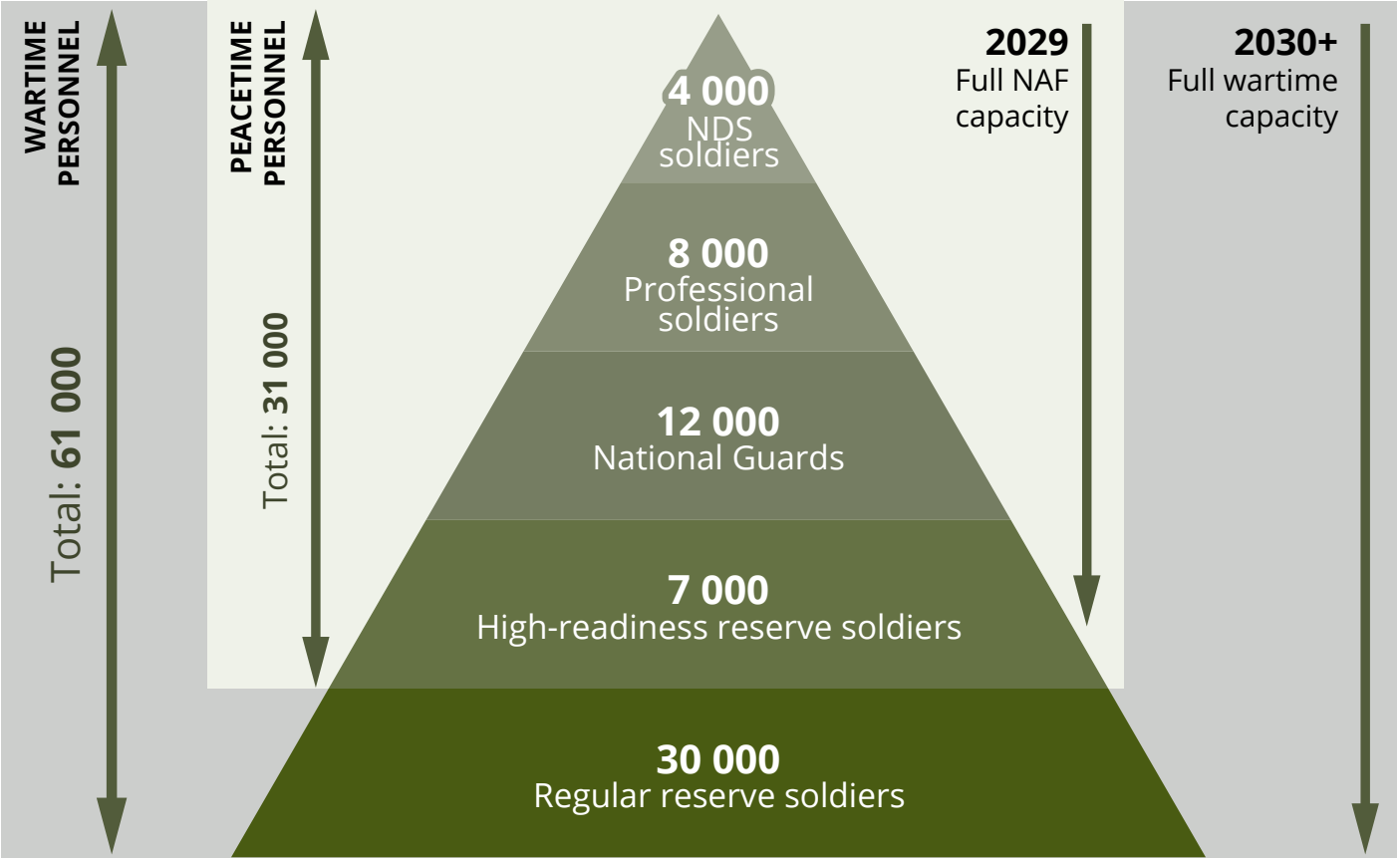
Human capital is essential for NAF’s development and operational effectiveness. To bolster its capabilities, NAF requires a significant increase in military personnel.

To strengthen Latvia’s defence readiness and societal resilience, the National Defence Service (NDS) was established in July 2023. The NDS will train Latvian citizens for state defence tasks, ensuring that NAF maintains full operational capacity across all units. The NDS is expected to reach its full capacity in 2028 with 4 000 soldiers finishing training in an 11-month military training programme, up to 2 000 NDS soldiers taking part in the National Guard five-year training programme, and up to 500 NDS soldiers participating in a reserve officer programme. Implementation of the NDS will significantly boost Latvia’s defence capabilities and personnel development goals will be achieved by improving military service conditions and better training. There will also be salary increases for soldiers, aligning them with labour market trends.

Additionally, social benefits for NAF soldiers and National Guards will be modernized.

According to the National Defence Concept, NAF will reach the capacity of 61 000 soldiers, of which 31 000 will account for peacetime personnel and an additional 30 000 regular reserve soldiers available during crisis or war. Latvia’s peacetime military force will consist of 31,000 personnel, including 4,000 soldiers trained through the National Defence Service’s 11-month program, 8,000 professional soldiers, 12,000 National Guards, and 7,000 high-readiness reserve soldiers who will undergo annual refresher training to maintain their skills and combat readiness. 30 000 soldiers of regular reserve will mostly be comprised of soldiers who have completed their service in high-readiness reserve or National Guard. Their skills will be maintained on an individual level by enlisting them for training every four years.

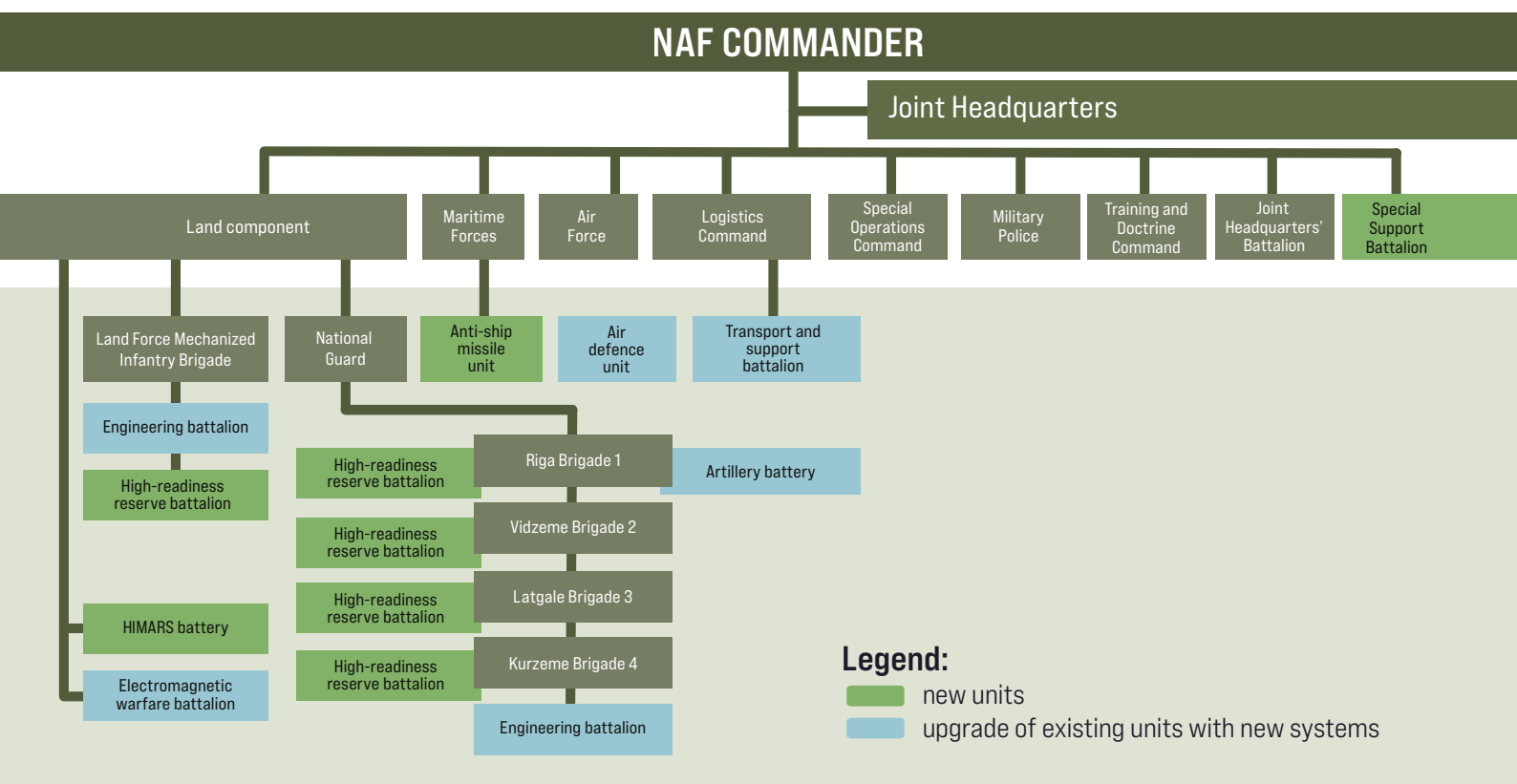
The increase of military personnel includes the establishment and expansion of new and existing NAF units. According to medium-term plans, the Land Forces will benefit from five new infantry battalions – one in the Mechanized Infantry Brigade and one in each of the National Guard brigades. These units will be trained as high-readiness reserve battalions, i.e., they will mostly consist of soldiers who have completed the active service of NDS.



FUTURE NAF STRUCTURE

The introduction of rocket artillery systems into NAF will lead to the establishment of new battery-sized rocket artillery units. Existing military engineering units will be upgraded to battalion level as part of the Land Force development process. There will also be a new Navy unit—anti-ship missile battery unit. This unit will be equipped with short-range and long-range missile systems to foster development of the layered coastal defence system. Existing communication and surveillance capabilities will be integrated within the anti-ship missile battery, thus establishing the Specialized Coastal Defence Unit.

The implementation of new medium-range air defence systems and modernized short-range air defence systems will create additional air defence battle groups, which will be integrated into all components. The introduction of new technologies and innovations across NAF structures will be implemented through two new high-tech battalions – an Electromagnetic Warfare Battalion, and a Special Support Battalion reporting directly to the Chief of Defence (NAF Commander). Continued development of logistics capabilities is crucial and will lead to the expansion of the Logistics command units, including the creation of the Transportation and Support Battalion based on the existing unit.

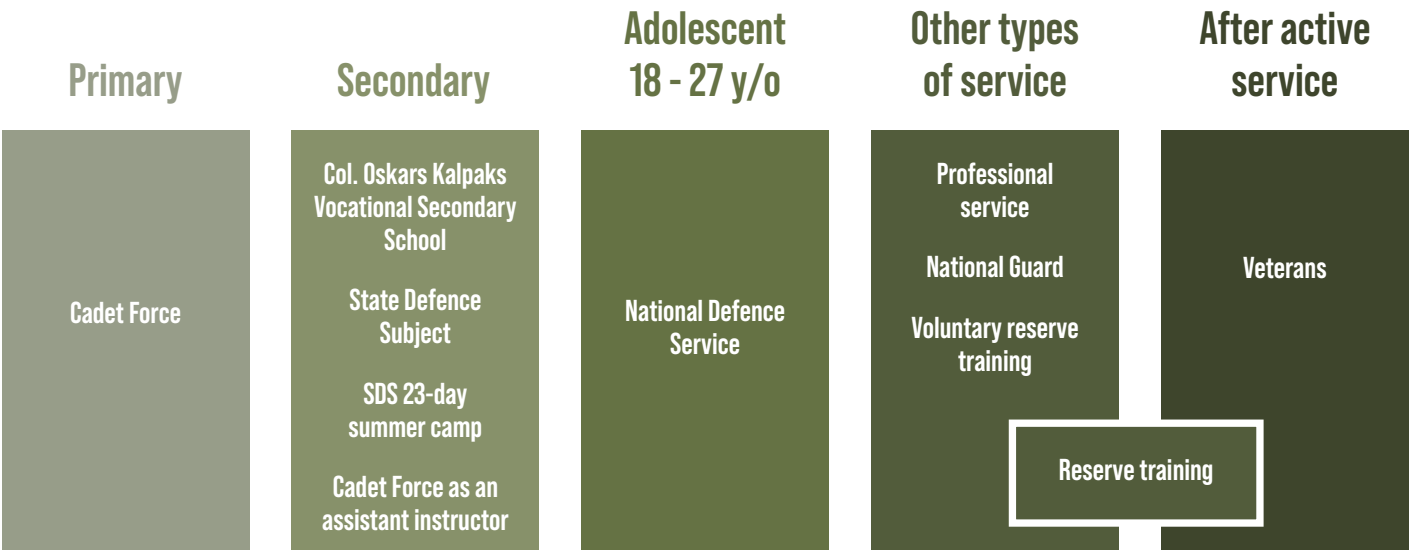


PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Implementation of the NAF Development Plan aims to promote a culture of readiness within society, ensuring that all members understand their roles and responsibilities in addressing various threats. The defence sector offers Latvian citizens an opportunity to cultivate a culture of readiness, starting from a young age through the Cadet Force, State Defence Subject (SDS), followed by secondary professional military education offered by Colonel Oskars Kalpaks Vocational Secondary School. After reaching legal age, Latvian citizens can join the

national defence service, become professional soldiers or join the National Guard. All citizens without any prior military experience can also undergo voluntary reserve training to become a reserve soldier.

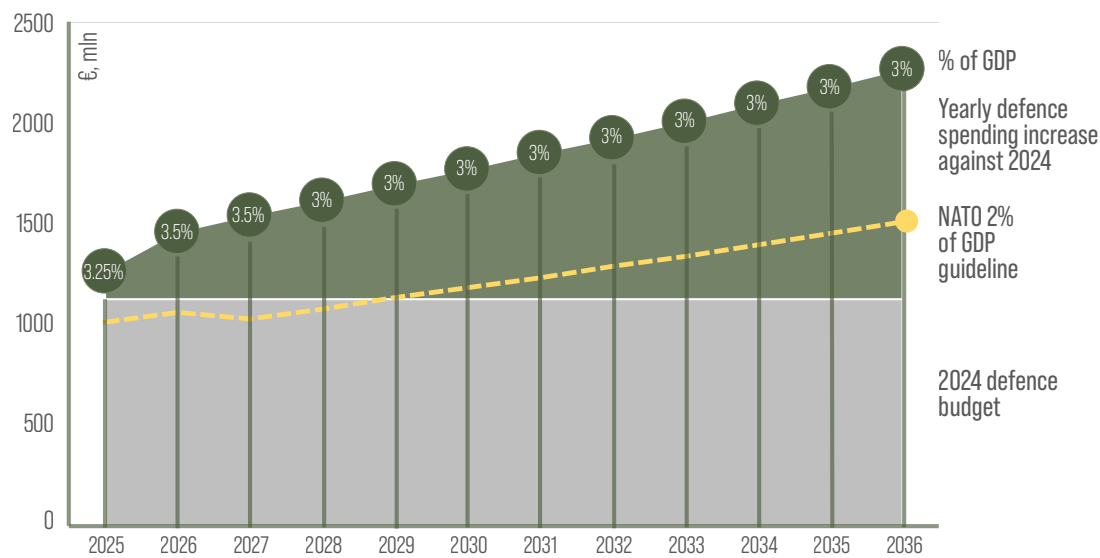
After active duty or service with the National Guard, Latvian citizens can continue to contribute to national defence as members of the National Guard Veterans' organization.



BUDGET

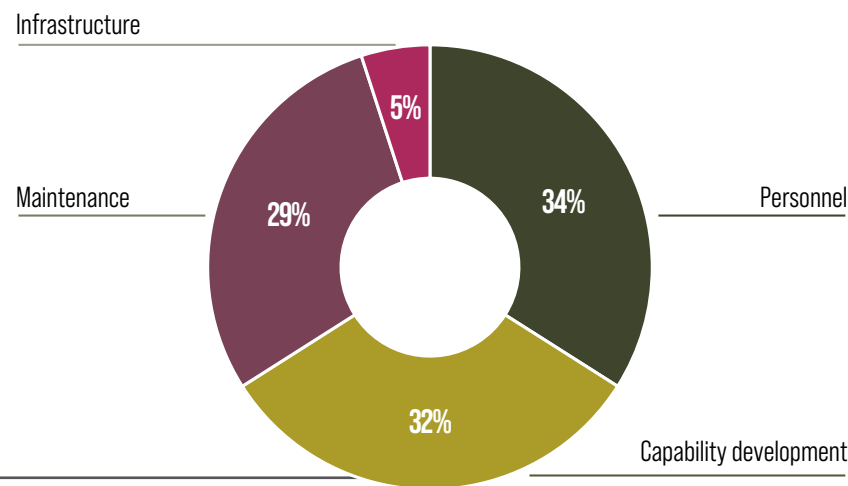
Further increase of defence spending is crucial for ensuring the continued development of capabilities in line with ambitious National Defence Concept goals. According to the approved budget plans and the Government’s decision to allocate extra funding for the development of

layered air defence and reinforcement of Latvia’s eastern border, the 2025 defence budget will reach 3.25% of the projected GDP. The Financing National Defence Law mandates medium and long-term defence spending of at least 3% of projected GDP.



In addition to national funding, significant financial support will be provided by NATO, the EU, and bilateral cooperation mechanisms. These funds will be invested in acquiring necessary resources and equipment, developing infrastructure, and training personnel to enhance various capabilities.

To ensure the balanced development of defence capabilities, aligned with NATO guidelines, the NAF Development Plan allocates funds for the maintenance of existing equipment, personnel costs and infrastructure developments costs as follows: 34 % - personnel costs, 32 % - capability development, 29 % - maintenance, and 5 % to be invested in infrastructure.



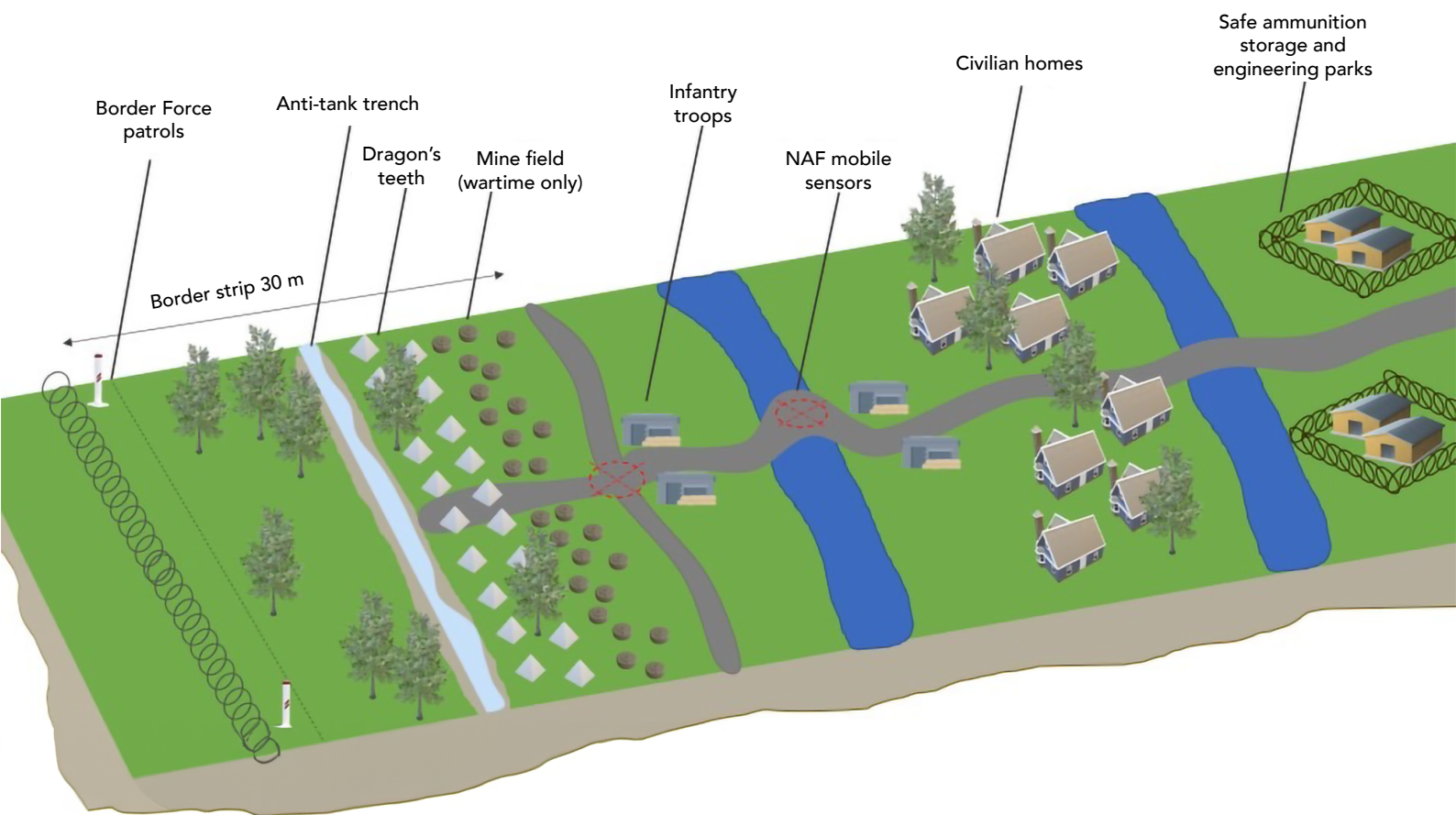
BUDGET BREAKDOWN 2025-2036

BORDER REINFORCEMENT

To safeguard Latvia's eastern border, the NAF Development Plan emphasizes bolstering the border using physical and technical counter-mobility measures. A defence line will be established along the border with Russia and Belarus, complete with a NAF military unit support point, various obstacle lines, anti-tank trenches and ammunition and mine storages depots. Meanwhile, the procurement of various types of mines and defensive

explosive charges will assist the development of kinetic defence capabilities. Additionally, a border fence will be constructed to strengthen Latvia's internal security and prevent illegal crossings. This comprehensive approach to military-technical reinforcement underscores Latvia's commitment to protecting its territory and people starting from the first centimeter.

30 KM BORDER AREA



INFRASTRUCTURE

Comprehensive and balanced defence and deterrence relies on the availability of infrastructure. That is why the medium-term plans prioritize significant investments into buildings and engineering facilities, alongside the modernization and renovation of existing NAF infrastructure. NAF intends to build new barracks and auxiliary infrastructure for the National Defence Service soldiers that will be stationed in eight military bases.

Considering NATO's plans to upgrade its enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Latvia to a brigade level, the main focus of the infrastructure development programme will be on the construction of the new Selonia military training area. It will become the largest training area in the Baltics and will be able to accommodate brigade level exercises. This in turn will contribute to enhanced readiness of NATO forces deployed to Latvia, enabling NAF and Allied units with the opportunity to

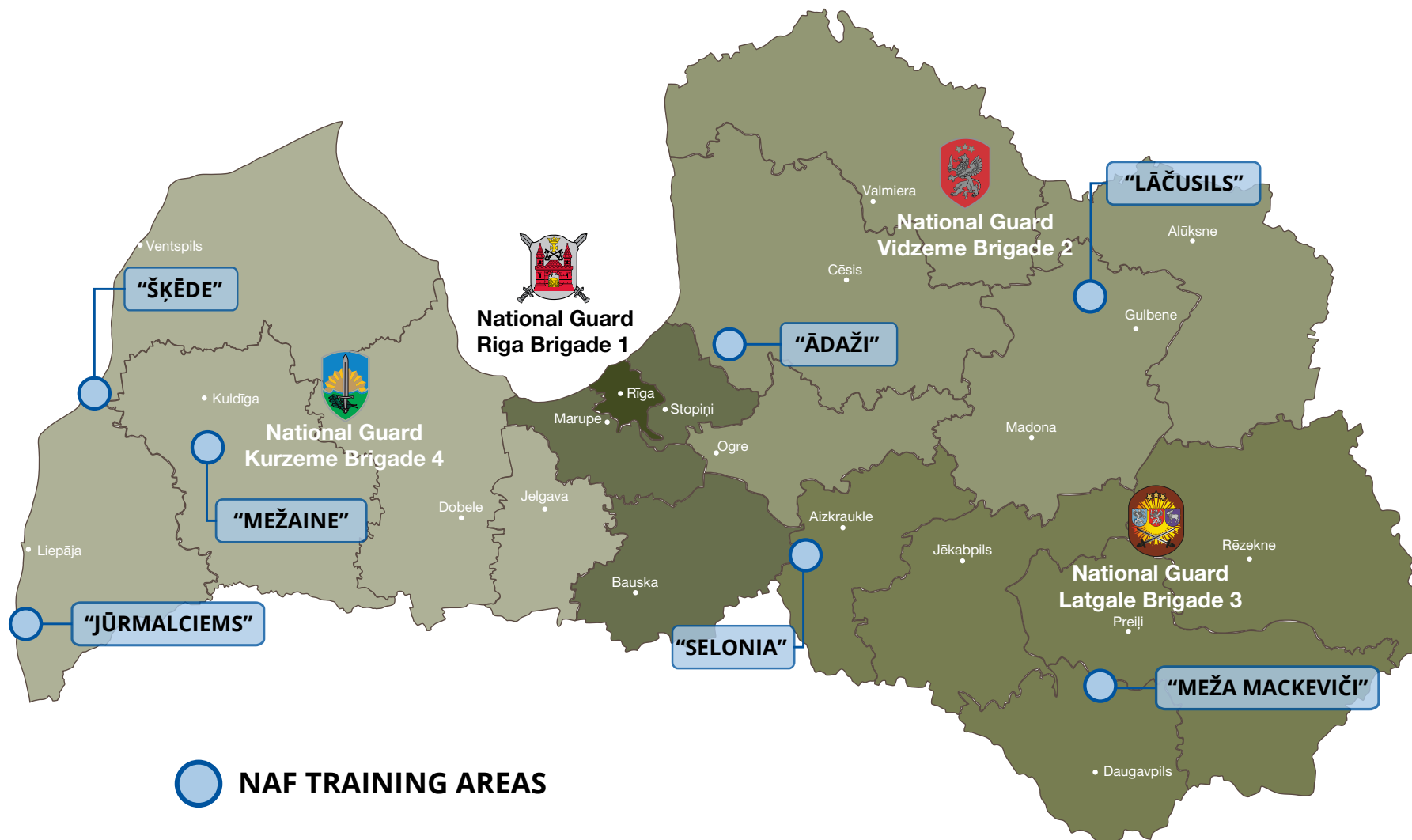
acquire combat capabilities that match NATO's standards. The availability of infrastructure is a key element in host nation support – allied presence requires Latvia to have infrastructure suitable for training and deployment of NATO forces. To ensure host nation support and reception staging and onward movement capabilities will require further development of infrastructure at Camp Ādaži, as well as the construction of new barracks and a canteen at the Mežaine training area.

A significant emphasis will be placed on the development of regional military infrastructure. By developing regional training areas, we can strengthen our national defence, create new job opportunities, and stimulate economic growth in the regions. Investments will be made in mobile infrastructure solutions like containerized systems to enhance resilience.

The newly-built Passenger Terminal at the NAF Lielvārde Base



REGIONAL NAF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS





LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ARMED FORCES
2025–2036
WHITE PAPER

