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Ukraine – European Union

- *THEME ANALYSIS: The Big Seven is turning into a European majority amid complications regarding Ukraine's accession to the EU*



Source: AP

The G7 summit, which began in Canada, came at a critical moment for Ukraine. On the one hand, US President Donald Trump's attempt to end Russia's war against Ukraine has failed, and it is becoming increasingly clear that he wants to distance himself from the issue. On the other hand, other G7 members, including the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, Canada and Japan, have declared their support for Ukraine, but lack the determination to take concrete steps. A telling example is the idea of sending a European military contingent to Ukraine: at the beginning of the year, the initiative was actively discussed, and preparations even began. But now the enthusiasm has waned significantly. ***"Europe has not yet decided whether it will stand by Ukraine to the end if US support disappears."***, — said President Volodymyr Zelensky on the eve of the summit.

At the same time, other events are unfolding that could affect the war in Ukraine and are sure to be topics of discussion in Canada. Immediately before the summit, the situation in the Middle East escalated: Israel struck Iranian nuclear and military facilities, to which Tehran responded with an attack. The escalation is intensifying, threatening the global economy, particularly due to oil price fluctuations. In addition, the conflicts in Ukraine and Iran are closely intertwined in Donald Trump's foreign policy. At the same time, the US trade dispute with its partners continues. Although some progress has been made with certain countries, the EU and Japan are still negotiating tariffs. The US has temporarily postponed the introduction of 50% tariffs on European goods until 9 July. According to the Financial Times, Brussels

fears that Trump may link the trade agreement to further support for Ukraine.¹

There is currently no common position among the G7 countries regarding Trump. According to Bloomberg, there will be no traditional final communiqué following the summit. Instead, the leaders have issued separate statements on key issues. This is part of the strategy to mitigate conflicts with Trump, which is being pursued by Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, the summit organiser. According to Anna Lachikhina, a partner at Good Politics and former advisor to the Canadian Parliament, Carney has chosen a different leadership style than his predecessor, Justin Trudeau. He is actively working to support Ukraine, avoiding loud statements and instead relying on pressure through backroom deals. It was during this summit that he hoped to reach an understanding between allies. In her opinion, Trudeau has every chance of becoming an effective mediator between Trump and European leaders. Canada, which chairs the G7 this year, has a decisive influence on the summit agenda. Prime Minister Mark Carney has included the issues of 'fair and sustainable peace in Ukraine' and the resolution of other global conflicts among the key topics. 'Although we have not yet heard any clear public statements on this matter, it is known that in internal discussions with his party colleagues, Carney emphasises the importance of the Ukrainian issue. In fact, Zelensky's invitation to participate in the summit is clear evidence of this,' Anna Lachikhina noted.

President Zelensky, in turn, outlined the main topics he plans to raise: these are **the process of negotiations to end the war, sanctions policy and further assistance to Ukraine**. 'We are close to important decisions on sanctions. And only through dialogue can we achieve a common understanding between the countries that are responsible for adopting serious sanctions capable of limiting the financing of Putin's war,' Zelensky emphasised. He also said that one of the topics would be Ukraine's post-war recovery. The central element of sanctions pressure on Russia remains the 'price cap' on its oil exports, introduced in December 2022 by the G7, the EU and Australia at \$60 per barrel. The idea is to reduce Russia's revenues without destabilising the global oil market. However, given the downward trend in world prices, the cap is becoming increasingly ineffective — although the escalation in the Middle East could change the situation.

In practice, the \$60 threshold has proven to be insufficient. On 20 May, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybига called on the G7 to lower the ceiling to \$30. However, this is unlikely. According to Reuters, the EU is proposing to lower it to \$50, a position also supported by the United Kingdom. At the same time, the United States remains opposed to such a move. According to Bloomberg, the White House believes that the final decision rests with Trump personally — and there is no change in the US position at this time. Washington's resistance has both economic and political reasons. **Trump is known for his lack of interest in sanctions against Moscow.** Even if European countries decide to lower the price cap on their own, without the participation of the United States, it will be less effective — in particular, due to Russia's circumvention of sanctions with the help of a 'shadow fleet' of tankers. After all, it is American sanctions that are key to real influence.

Meanwhile, numerous bilateral meetings with Volodymyr Zelenskyy were planned at the summit, the most important of which was a conversation with Donald Trump. Among the priority topics were sanctions against Russia. Although Trump himself does not support their strengthening, a corresponding bill authored by Senators Graham and Blumenthal is already ready in the Senate. There are enough votes for its adoption, but the final approval of the US

¹ Семеро проти Трампа. Чого Україні чекати від саміту G7 у Канаді. 15.06.2025.
<https://www.rbc.ua/rus/news/semero-proti-trampa-chogo-ukrayini-chekati-1749930077.html>

president is required. 'I hope that even if there is no final decision by then, I will at least be able to understand how close we are to it,' Zelensky said on 12 June. In a situation where Trump is showing less and less interest in ending the war in Ukraine, **Kyiv seeks to focus on two main areas.**

The primary issue for Kyiv remains the preservation of intelligence sharing with the United States. According to Politico estimates, about 80% of all intelligence information used by Ukraine comes from abroad, mainly from the United States. This includes radar surveillance data, satellite imagery, and air threat warnings. In March, Washington suspended the exchange of data for several days, which immediately had a negative impact on the situation at the front. In this context, there are also positive signs. According to Foreign Policy, even if the Trump administration cuts military aid to Ukraine, intelligence sharing is likely to continue. This form of support does not require significant funding, but allows the US to influence the course of the war without direct involvement in combat operations.²

The second critical issue that Zelensky planned to discuss with Trump was permission to purchase American weapons. Although Kyiv does not have its own funds for purchases, European allies could pay for these deals. Ukraine is currently still using weapons that were approved for delivery at the end of Joe Biden's presidency. The last batches are expected to arrive in the second half of July. In the future, the free transfer of weapons seems unlikely. Europe, despite a gradual increase in production, is not yet able to completely replace the United States, especially in the context of air defence systems. German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius has already announced Berlin's readiness to purchase additional Patriot systems for Ukraine.

A separate advantage of the paid supply option could be an appeal to Trump's business-oriented logic. But there are obstacles here too — first and foremost, his unwillingness to confront Putin. In addition, the situation in the Middle East may force the US to reallocate its defence resources in favour of Israel. 'We have a specific package of weapons that we want to purchase from the US. This issue can only be resolved at the presidential level,' Volodymyr Zelensky said on the eve of the summit.

It is clear that the current summit was an attempt by Ukraine and its European partners to force Trump to take a clearer position on Russia's aggression. The previous meeting between Zelensky and Trump in the Vatican helped to close the chapter on past scandals in relations. The new meeting could be the next step towards more constructive cooperation — at least that is what Kyiv is hoping for. Given the unpredictability of the new American leader, his eccentric behaviour and tendency to make sudden decisions, any meeting with him is particularly important. But this time it was not a bilateral visit to the White House, but negotiations with several leaders at once — a new format for Trump. The summit was also of particular importance for Ukraine. **President Volodymyr Zelensky was officially invited to participate in the G7 meeting for the first time**, The White House agreed to a full-length 40-minute meeting with Trump. At the same time, a number of expectations placed on this summit did not come true — largely due to Trump's own actions.

The main conclusion: the summit demonstrated the actual transformation of the 'Big Seven' into the 'Six Plus One.' Trump, while remaining legally part of the G7, is essentially no longer a full member. Neither attempts to reach an agreement nor public demonstrations of respect from other leaders were able to convince him to join in the joint work and share the

² "Велика шістка". Як Трамп зруйнував саміт G7 у Канаді та що буде з союзом держав Заходу. 18.06.2025. <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2025/06/18/7214038/>

group's common values. This not only dealt a blow to the effectiveness of the summit in Canada, but also revealed a deeper problem: without the unity of the seven countries, the group loses its ability to make important collective decisions. And although no one is formally talking about the 'collapse' of the G7, in reality the effectiveness of this format is highly questionable. Trump's demarche was particularly telling, as he unexpectedly disrupted the programme, left Canada after less than a day of participation, and later even allowed himself to publicly insult Emmanuel Macron. Officially, the White House explained this by the need to respond urgently to the situation with Iran, but the real motives were probably different. The Ukrainian issue, in particular, may have played a role in Trump's decision, although not a decisive one. So, **the summit in Canada proved to be a marker of a serious crisis within the G7** — both in its relations with the United States and in its ability to formulate a common stance in the face of global challenges. It's worth recalling that G7 summits are annual gatherings of leaders from major Western countries, traditionally held over a weekend in the country presiding that year. But there are sometimes exceptions — for example, in 2014, when Russia was expelled from the G8 after annexing Crimea, and the summit was urgently relocated from Sochi to Brussels. Another exception came in 2020, when the Trump administration's planned summit was canceled due to the pandemic. This year, history repeated itself. The first day was spent on bilateral meetings and closed-door negotiations among European leaders and the Canadian prime minister, without U.S. participation. The content of those talks remains undisclosed.

But the real surprise came the following day. After several sessions on Monday, the White House unexpectedly announced that Trump was cutting short his participation and leaving Canada early. He cited "obvious reasons" — referring to the escalation of war between Israel and Iran. White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt clarified that the U.S. had already achieved much at the summit and now needed to focus on the Middle East. The decision came as a surprise: Trump had important meetings scheduled for Tuesday, including a 40-minute talk with Volodymyr Zelenskyy. That dialogue was supposed to be the first truly substantial conversation between the presidents of Ukraine and the U.S. since Trump's return to power. There was also a planned joint G7-Ukraine session and separate talks with several key partners: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum, and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. All of these contacts were simply canceled. Trump only promised Claudia Sheinbaum a phone call.

This step did not come as a complete shock to G7 leaders — they are used to the unpredictable behavior of the American president. At the same time, everyone publicly tried to save face and justify his actions. French President Emmanuel Macron, for instance, claimed that the U.S. allegedly had a concrete proposal to halt the escalation in the Middle East, and if they succeeded, "that would be very good." But instead of gratitude for diplomatic support, Trump responded with insults. In a post, he wrote: "He (Macron) has no idea why I'm going to Washington. It's definitely not because of a ceasefire. Whether intentionally or not — Emmanuel always gets it wrong!" This episode only underscored the rift between the U.S. and the rest of the G7. Trump's public walkout, the scrapped negotiations — including those involving Ukraine — and his open jabs at partners reinforced the sense that the G7 is increasingly looking like a group of six countries striving to maintain a united front, and one member constantly stepping outside it.

In this case, it must be said: Macron was probably mistaken. The White House never officially mentioned any plans for a ceasefire, and the course of events suggests Washington was considering possible intervention in the Middle East conflict, not peace efforts. Moreover, Pentagon actions give the impression of preparing for a military scenario. So Trump's reaction to the French president's words, while seemingly a denial, was needlessly

harsh and unjustified — especially given how many inaccuracies and manipulations came from Trump himself during the summit.

A telling moment was his impromptu press conference ahead of a meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney. There, Trump offered his own alternative version of how Russia's war against Ukraine began: he claimed the conflict started because Russia was expelled from the G8 in 2014. He falsely stated that the G7 did not exist before that, when in fact the group had functioned as a "seven" since the 1970s until the mid-1990s, and only later did Russia join. Then it got even more absurd: Trump blamed Canada's Justin Trudeau for Russia's expulsion, saying he convinced "one or two others," including Obama, to "kick Putin out." He repeated this claim several times, adding that "without this, there would have been no war." But the facts are simple: Russia was excluded after occupying Crimea, and Trudeau became prime minister only in 2015. In 2014, he was the opposition leader and had no influence over G7 decisions.

This is clearly either a deliberate manipulation or a disregard for basic facts. Either way, such statements — coming from a U.S. president on the international stage — represent a serious diplomatic failure. Still, Carney chose not to correct him, likely to avoid escalating an already tense moment. Given Trump's known animosity toward Trudeau, the mistake may have also been a political move rather than a coincidence.

Throughout the summit, participants — including the host, Carney — tried to make things as comfortable as possible for Trump, avoiding open confrontation and agreeing to compromises. Carney himself publicly emphasized America's role, saying: "G7 is nothing without America's leadership," while welcoming Trump before the meeting. This was reflected in decision-making: for instance, the final document on the Middle East situation was rewritten to accommodate U.S. wishes — even amid doubts over whether it aligned with the European Union's position. However, all these efforts to smooth things over proved futile. Despite the partners' demonstrative flexibility, Trump still left the summit early, once again casting doubt on the G7's ability to act as a unified political club.

In conclusion, it's safe to say that nothing truly extraordinary happened in the U.S. that could justify Trump's hasty return to Washington. The situation in the Middle East hasn't fundamentally changed during this time either. This isn't the first time a U.S. president has staged such walkouts during international summits. Back in 2018, Trump also unexpectedly left early without signing the final communiqué, then met with Kim Jong-un a few days later. That meeting led to no breakthrough — but unlike now, G7 leaders at the time weren't trying to appease him, and their disagreements were much more openly expressed. That same year, Trump threatened to leave the NATO summit early, and in 2019, he actually left the London meeting ahead of schedule. Today, European leaders are trying to avoid conflict with the American president, but that doesn't change his unpredictable behavior. A recent example is the farewell ceremony for the Pope, where Trump canceled all planned bilateral meetings — including a possible second meeting with Zelenskyy.

The reasons for such decisions are likely to be deeper than mere personal antipathy or disagreement with certain topics. **Western leaders are alien to Trump not only politically, but also mentally.** He is not particularly interested in multilateral diplomacy and the values that underpin the Western world. He feels much more comfortable engaging in dialogue with autocrats — it is simpler, more concrete, without complicated principles and morals. The situation is further complicated by the fact that for Trump, Zelensky is a figure associated

with a series of failures, including the failure to fulfil his promise to end the war in Ukraine ‘within a day.’ *Given that the second day of the summit was to be devoted to Ukraine, Trump had minimal interest in continuing to participate in the summit.* Today, the G7 is undergoing perhaps its greatest transformation since its inception. Having lost its unity, this group has effectively lost its ability to make decisions. The remaining members are not ready to push forward key initiatives without the participation of the United States — in particular, this is why the price cap on Russian oil has not been lowered, despite the symbolism and obvious necessity of this step.

The United States, represented by Trump, refused to take collective responsibility. The president stated that he first wanted to see what the Europeans would do, and only then would he consider whether to join them. This was a striking example of how the G7 currently functions (or rather, does not function). The summit in Canada failed to adopt a joint resolution on Ukraine — even a declarative one. For the first time in history, the G7 leaders' meeting ended without a joint communiqué. Instead, seven separate statements were published — mainly on topics that are important to the United States: Iran, international repression, artificial intelligence, migration, fires, critical minerals, etc. None of these decisions mention Ukraine or Russia. By comparison, Ukraine was mentioned more than fifty times in the 2024 communiqué.

Formally, the G7 remains — but de facto it has turned into a ‘G6+1’. And the new role of the US in this format is not that of a leader, but of an isolationist who influences everyone but is not ready to take responsibility for the common good. Today's G7 summits increasingly resemble diplomatic ‘fairs’ — an opportunity for leaders to hold bilateral talks, discuss individual agreements or trade issues, as Trump did with Britain or Canada. But **The strategic function — to be the voice of the collective West — has been lost.** And it is this transformation that is the main outcome of the Canadian summit. Not Trump's early departure, not the failure of negotiations on Ukraine, but the blurring of the very meaning of the G7's existence in its classic form.

Foreign and Defense Policy of Ukraine

- *THEME ANALYSIS: Is it worth believing in yet another NATO summit in The Hague?*



Source: AP

The NATO summit in The Hague took place on 24–25 June 2025 at the World Forum. It was the first summit in the Netherlands and the first chaired by the new Secretary General, Mark Rutte. The focus was on increasing defence spending, assessing threats from Russia and reaffirming support for Ukraine. Against a backdrop of global instability, participants focused on strengthening unity, formulating a common position on Russia and reaffirming long-term commitments to Ukraine. The meeting demonstrated NATO's ability to consolidate politically even amid leadership changes in key countries.

For several days, the atmosphere in the city went beyond that of a standard international meeting: complex negotiations, the risk of escalation, and attempts to preserve the unity of the North Atlantic Alliance. The meeting resulted in a short five-point document, which focused on increasing defence spending by European allies and Canada. At the same time, NATO's policy on Ukraine was declared unchanged. This signal came as a surprise even to some analysts, who had recently been emphasising the growing internal divisions within the Alliance. Even countries that had previously taken a critical stance on support for Ukraine — Hungary in particular — did not object to the wording this time. According to diplomatic sources, Washington's position was the decisive factor: the lack of resistance from the American president sent a clear signal that now is not the time for public objections. This was a key factor in avoiding conflict with Budapest.

In addition, the NATO Secretary General confirmed that Ukraine's path to membership remains open. Although such a statement is not groundbreaking, its presence indicates that there are no intentions to revise the political framework of the partnership, despite the change in the political context. The summit in The Hague was an indicator that the United States does not currently plan to withdraw its support for Ukraine. For allies, this creates the conditions for maintaining coordination and unity without waiting for a change in Washington's foreign

policy course. However, how long this stability will last is an open question. The current consolidation creates a window of opportunity for Kyiv to maintain the level of cooperation it has achieved.³

The organisational aspects of the summit also had a political dimension: a night at the royal palace, the formal participation of the Dutch royal family, the adaptation of the schedule to the wishes of the American president, and a significant number of public gestures that resonated in the Western media. Donald Trump gave these moments additional publicity, in particular by publishing a personal letter from NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, which contained a positive assessment of his role. In response, Rutte thanked him and even publicly called Trump ‘Dad,’ which attracted the attention of observers.

At the same time, such rhetoric did not cause surprise in political circles: summit participants note that it reflected the real atmosphere of the meeting. One of the delegates commented to European Truth: ‘To understand the general mood, it is enough to read Rutte's letter — it speaks for itself.’

This approach, according to the Alliance, proved to be effective. The American delegation gave the summit a positive assessment, which was evident during Trump's final press conference. He also met with the President of Ukraine. Volodymyr Zelensky took the context into account, appearing at the event in a restrained black outfit that looked more formal than usual. The main agreements on Ukraine were reached even before the summit began. **Ukraine as a priority, Russia as a long-term threat.**

Although the summit's final document is short, it contains important signals. Instead of a broad list of topics, the Alliance focused on one priority — increasing defence spending, which is an internal matter for member countries. However, **The text mentions two countries outside NATO — Russia and Ukraine.** The United States initially also initiated the inclusion of a reference to China, but the allies decided to limit the document to the European context in order to avoid further confrontation. The wording regarding Russia is clear: it is named as the main long-term threat to Euro-Atlantic security. This definition has been used before, but this time it was fundamentally confirmed by the new American administration. The issue of Ukraine was reflected in the final document thanks to the coordinated efforts of a number of allies. It was proven that the increase in defence spending also applies to aid to Ukraine, which is deterring Russian aggression. Despite initial reservations, the US agreed with this approach. The document provides for the possibility of including spending on support for the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the national defence budgets of NATO member states. This is important for two reasons: first, it will be easier for some countries with smaller armies — such as Luxembourg or Belgium — to achieve the targets set; second, this approach recognises Ukraine's contribution to Euro-Atlantic security. The text clearly states: ‘Allies reaffirm their unwavering sovereign commitment to support Ukraine, whose security is a contribution to our common security, and to this end will include their direct donations to Ukraine's defence and contributions to its defence industry in the calculation of national defence expenditure.’ This is a new stage in NATO's relations with Ukraine, which can be considered a strategic achievement.

Even before the summit began, analysts at European Truth pointed out that the short and focused format of the resolution was optimal for Kyiv. The absence of a direct mention of membership is not a negative, as it allows existing political and legal guarantees to be

³ Саміт НАТО на користь України: як вдалося подолати опір Орбана і Трампа. 25.06.2025.
<https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2025/06/25/7214589>

preserved. Against the backdrop of previous statements by Trump and his entourage about possible concessions to the Kremlin, Ukraine's strategy of measured restraint proved to be appropriate.

In recent weeks, Washington's rhetoric has changed. The White House does not yet support the idea of Ukraine's immediate accession to the Alliance, but public statements are no longer critical. However, on Monday, Rutte announced that after meeting with Trump, Ukraine's course towards NATO would remain irreversible. In other words, even before the public discussion at the summit, he confirmed that support for membership would not be reconsidered, even though there was no mention of it in the final declaration. The very next day, on Tuesday, Rutte went further, stating that the decision was part of the process of bringing Ukraine closer to NATO. This explains why other Alliance member states, which have traditionally been critical of Ukraine, did not block the decision this time. First and foremost, this concerns Hungary. Viktor Orbán's cabinet has long and consistently opposed Ukraine's integration into both the EU and NATO. This has become part of his electoral strategy — such statements are made regularly, and each one strengthens his position ahead of the elections.

Why did the Hungarian government, despite its public position, not prevent the adoption of a document that directly contradicts its own statements? The answer is obvious: Donald Trump played a key role. The political dependence of the Hungarian leadership on Washington's position — especially in the context of personal relations with Trump — is well known and documented. This was confirmed by numerous publications in European Truth during Trump's first term, and the topic remains relevant today. The domestic political situation in Hungary is currently less stable, so it is more important than ever for Orbán to maintain US support, and especially Trump's personal sympathy. The summit in The Hague clearly demonstrated this: ***The Hungarian leader is not prepared to go against the position of the American president, even if it concerns issues that were previously considered fundamental, in particular Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic prospects.***

The summit in The Hague ended with a two-and-a-half-hour meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the level of heads of state and government. This was followed by a press conference with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte and a series of statements to the media with the participation of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. These events formally closed the summit, which, according to media estimates, was not only one of the shortest but also one of the most expensive in the history of the Alliance: the organisation cost €183.4 million, which is approximately more than €1 million for every minute of the event. **Such a high cost was due to the special format tailored to Donald Trump's participation.** As a result, NATO organizers significantly shortened the summit agenda, limited the final document to one page, and tailored the protocol for the American president as much as possible so that he would not leave early. All allies were waiting for Trump to confirm the United States' commitment to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty on collective defense. This issue became particularly acute against the backdrop of warnings from European intelligence agencies and statements by the NATO Secretary General about the possible launch of a new military campaign by Moscow against the Alliance in the next 3-5 years. However, while still in the air aboard Air Force One, Trump said: "There are many interpretations of Article 5. You understand that, right?" Kyiv, on the other hand, expected not only a meeting with Zelensky (which Trump confirmed), but also approval for the sale of weapons to Ukraine — this is what Zelensky tried to achieve at the G7 summit in Canada, but the meeting did not take place at that time.

In addition to the issue of Ukraine, the allies discussed other challenges related to security on the eastern flank. Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof, opening the NATO Public Forum, said: 'This summit is not just about money,' although in reality financial issues and Trump's role dominated the agenda. The American president independently published on the social network Truth Social his correspondence with Mark Rutte, in which the secretary general praised him for his 'bold actions in Iran' and 'new successes in the Alliance.' In response, Rutte noted: "This is a breakthrough. We managed to achieve 5%. Donald, you have achieved what dozens of previous presidents have failed to do." Trump ironically noted that the NATO summit would be much calmer than the events in Israel and Iran, and hinted that he might have stayed in The Hague longer if he had received more personal praise.⁴

However, Trump's main diplomatic victory was the establishment of a new standard for defence spending — 5% of GDP. Formally, this indicator is not mandatory for everyone, as it is presented as a common goal for allies, not individual countries. The United States and Spain have exceptions to this rule. At the same time, nine countries, including Belgium, Canada, Italy, Montenegro, and Croatia, still do not even meet the 2014 commitment to spend at least 2% of GDP on defence.

It was expected that both Russia and China would be mentioned in the final document as key threats, but due to fears of escalating confrontation with China, the allies settled only on Russia, recognising it as the main long-term threat to Euro-Atlantic security, but not as an aggressor. Importantly, this wording was supported by the Trump administration.

As for Ukraine, its mention in the declaration was preserved thanks to the joint efforts of the partners. The Alliance recognised that support for the Ukrainian Armed Forces could be taken into account in the defence budgets of the allies, which is beneficial for countries with small armies, such as Luxembourg and Belgium, as it helps them formally achieve the 5% target. The document clearly states: 'Allies reaffirm their unwavering sovereign commitments to support Ukraine, whose security is a contribution to our security.' **Ukraine remained on the sidelines of this summit with an uncertain future. The issue of Ukraine's membership in NATO has effectively disappeared from the agenda.** In 2023–2024, the topic was actively discussed, but at this summit it was not mentioned either in documents or in speeches. The President of Ukraine participated only in official events and evenings within the framework of the summit. Even the joint briefing with Rutte, Koszta and von der Leyen did not contain any mention of Ukraine's accession.

The course of the Russian-Ukrainian war

⁴ Задовольнити Трампа: чотири головні проблеми саміту НАТО в Гаазі, які вплинуть на Україну. 25.06.2025. <https://tsn.ua/ukrayina/zadovolnyty-trampa-chotyry-holovni-problemy-samitu-nato-v-haazi-iaki-vplynut-na-ukrayinu-2856599.html>



Source: Army FM

■ *Changes at the front*

Trend: *Faced with the strong defence of Ukrainian troops, the Russians are changing the vectors of their main offensive*

Russia continues to be most active in the Pokrovsk direction. Ukrainian defence forces are holding back the occupiers' advance, repelling up to 50 attacks per day.

The first vector is north of the Novopavlivka direction. This is Russia's attempt to reach the administrative border between Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk regions, which is a continuation of the Novopavlivka axis. The second vector is the advance of Russian troops east of Pokrovsk and their push beyond the Pokrovsk-Kostiantynivka highway, attempting to move further north toward Kostiantynivka. This, too, poses a significant threat. It is an active and intense direction, and one of Russia's key plans for this summer campaign is to break into open operational space in order to threaten either the Pokrovsk–Myrnohrad agglomeration or the city of Kostiantynivka.

On the Siversk–Slobozhanske and Kursk directions, clashes between Ukrainian and Russian forces continue nonstop. Russian aviation constantly carries out strikes, dropping guided aerial bombs.

On the Southern Slobozhanske axis, Russia continues its offensive near Vovchansk, Zelenyi, Ambarne, and toward Kutkivka — fighting is ongoing.

In the Kupiansk direction, Russian troops are attacking near Holubivka but are being repelled.

On the Lyman axis, Russian forces are assaulting Ukrainian positions near Novyi Myr, Ridkodub, Zelena Dolyna, Torske, and in the Serebriansky forest, as well as toward Serebrianka and Olhivka. The fighting there is still ongoing.

In the Kramatorsk direction, Russian forces are trying to advance near Markove, Predtechyne, and Bila Hora. Ukrainian Defense Forces are holding their positions.

In the Toretsk direction, Russian troops are attempting to break through Ukraine's defense lines near Diliivka. Ukrainian defenders are repelling numerous attacks.

In the Pokrovsk direction, Russian forces are trying to displace Ukrainian troops from their positions near the settlements of Popiv Yar, Razine, Myroliubivka, Novoekonomichne, Lysivka, Shevchenko, Novoukrainka, Zvyrove, Udachne, Novoserhiivka, Kotliarivka, Orikhove, and Oleksiivka. Defense Forces are holding back the pressure.

On the Novopavlivka axis, Ukrainian defenders halted Russia's assault operations. The enemy attempted to advance with small infantry groups and light equipment near the settlements of Pidubne, Fedorivka, Voskresenka, Shevchenko, Novosilka, Vilne Pole, and Novopil.

On the Huliaipole axis, fighting continues near Malynivka, where Ukrainian defenders are repelling one Russian attack after another.

In the Orikhiv direction, Ukrainian units are pushing back Russian assaults near Kamianske and toward Mala Tokmachka. Russian aviation is striking Prymorske with unguided rockets.

■ *Military assistance*

Portugal has allocated €21.45 million to support Ukraine, including funding for training Ukrainian F-16 pilots and providing satellite intelligence. Of this amount, €954,000 will go directly toward the training of Ukrainian fighter pilots within the framework of the international F-16 Air Force Capability Coalition, operating under the Ukraine Defence Contact Group (UDCG), which is responsible for developing Ukraine's air capabilities. Separately, Portugal will allocate €20.5 million to provide Ukraine's Defence Forces with satellite intelligence — specifically, optical satellite imagery and synthetic aperture radar (SAR) data. It's worth noting that Portugal and Ukraine previously signed a bilateral security agreement that includes cooperation in military training, arms transfers, intelligence sharing, technical assistance, and countering hostile propaganda. Portugal has already delivered a significant amount of weaponry to Ukraine, including Leopard 2A6 tanks, SA-330 Puma and Ka-32 helicopters, M113 armored personnel carriers, mortars, and artillery systems. The country also participates in European programs for the production of ammunition and drones.

Germany. Ukraine is seeking to obtain four IRIS-T surface-to-air missile systems from Germany, along with munitions: 1,500 missiles for the medium-range IRIS-T SLM and 500 for the short-range IRIS-T SLS systems. Kyiv is also requesting 200,000 40mm anti-aircraft rounds, which are used to destroy enemy drones. Additionally, Ukraine has asked for 1,000 mine-resistant vehicles, 200 tracked armored vehicles of various types, 30 engineering vehicles for demining, and 20 to 30 heavy armored engineering vehicles of the WiSENT type. The list also includes 200 off-road vehicles for special forces, 1,000 GPS jammers for intercepting enemy drones, and 200 mobile ground surveillance radars. The German government has both the technical and financial capacity to meet this request: Germany's

defense budget for supporting Ukraine in 2025 has increased to €8.3 billion — €1.2 billion more than last year.

■ *Russia: External and internal challenges*

Trend: *How will the latest truce between Israel and Iran affect the course of the Russian-Ukrainian war?*

The NATO summit in The Hague took place on 24–25 June 2025 at the World Forum. It was the first summit in the Netherlands and the first chaired by the new Secretary General, Mark Rutte. The focus was on increasing defence spending, assessing threats from Russia and reaffirming support for Ukraine. Against a backdrop of global instability, participants focused on strengthening unity, formulating a common position on Russia and reaffirming long-term commitments to Ukraine. The meeting demonstrated NATO's ability to consolidate politically even amid leadership changes in key countries.

For several days, the atmosphere in the city went beyond that of a standard international meeting: complex negotiations, the risk of escalation, and attempts to preserve the unity of the North Atlantic Alliance. The meeting resulted in a short five-point document, which focused on increasing defence spending by European allies and Canada. At the same time, NATO's policy on Ukraine was declared unchanged. This signal came as a surprise even to some analysts, who had recently been emphasising the growing internal divisions within the Alliance. Even countries that had previously taken a critical stance on support for Ukraine — Hungary in particular — did not object to the wording this time. According to diplomatic sources, Washington's position was the decisive factor: the lack of resistance from the American president sent a clear signal that now is not the time for public objections. This was a key factor in avoiding conflict with Budapest.

In addition, the NATO Secretary General confirmed that Ukraine's path to membership remains open. Although such a statement is not groundbreaking, its presence indicates that there are no intentions to revise the political framework of the partnership, despite the change in the political context. The summit in The Hague was an indicator that the United States does not currently plan to withdraw its support for Ukraine. For allies, this creates the conditions for maintaining coordination and unity without waiting for a change in Washington's foreign policy course. However, how long this stability will last is an open question. The current consolidation creates a window of opportunity for Kyiv to maintain the level of cooperation it has achieved.⁵

The organisational aspects of the summit also had a political dimension: a night at the royal palace, the formal participation of the Dutch royal family, the adaptation of the schedule to the wishes of the American president, and a significant number of public gestures that resonated in the Western media. Donald Trump gave these moments additional publicity, in particular by publishing a personal letter from NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, which contained a positive assessment of his role. In response, Rutte thanked him and even publicly called Trump 'Dad,' which attracted the attention of observers.

⁵ Саміт НАТО на користь України: як вдалося подолати опір Орбана і Трампа. 25.06.2025.
<https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2025/06/25/7214589>

At the same time, such rhetoric did not cause surprise in political circles: summit participants note that it reflected the real atmosphere of the meeting. One of the delegates commented to European Truth: ‘To understand the general mood, it is enough to read Rutte's letter — it speaks for itself.’

This approach, according to the Alliance, proved to be effective. The American delegation gave the summit a positive assessment, which was evident during Trump's final press conference. He also met with the President of Ukraine. Volodymyr Zelensky took the context into account, appearing at the event in a restrained black outfit that looked more formal than usual. The main agreements on Ukraine were reached even before the summit began. **Ukraine as a priority, Russia as a long-term threat.**

Although the summit's final document is short, it contains important signals. Instead of a broad list of topics, the Alliance focused on one priority — increasing defence spending, which is an internal matter for member countries. However, **The text mentions two countries outside NATO — Russia and Ukraine.** The United States initially also initiated the inclusion of a reference to China, but the allies decided to limit the document to the European context in order to avoid further confrontation. The wording regarding Russia is clear: it is named as the main long-term threat to Euro-Atlantic security. This definition has been used before, but this time it was fundamentally confirmed by the new American administration. The issue of Ukraine was reflected in the final document thanks to the coordinated efforts of a number of allies. It was proven that the increase in defence spending also applies to aid to Ukraine, which is deterring Russian aggression. Despite initial reservations, the US agreed with this approach. The document provides for the possibility of including spending on support for the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the national defence budgets of NATO member states. This is important for two reasons: first, it will be easier for some countries with smaller armies — such as Luxembourg or Belgium — to achieve the targets set; second, this approach recognises Ukraine's contribution to Euro-Atlantic security. The text clearly states: ‘Allies reaffirm their unwavering sovereign commitment to support Ukraine, whose security is a contribution to our common security, and to this end will include their direct donations to Ukraine's defence and contributions to its defence industry in the calculation of national defence expenditure.’ This is a new stage in NATO's relations with Ukraine, which can be considered a strategic achievement.

Even before the summit began, analysts at European Truth pointed out that the short and focused format of the resolution was optimal for Kyiv. The absence of a direct mention of membership is not a negative, as it allows existing political and legal guarantees to be preserved. Against the backdrop of previous statements by Trump and his entourage about possible concessions to the Kremlin, Ukraine's strategy of measured restraint proved to be appropriate.

In recent weeks, Washington's rhetoric has changed. The White House does not yet support the idea of Ukraine's immediate accession to the Alliance, but public statements are no longer critical. However, on Monday, Rutte announced that after meeting with Trump, Ukraine's course towards NATO would remain irreversible. In other words, even before the public discussion at the summit, he confirmed that support for membership would not be reconsidered, even though there was no mention of it in the final declaration. The very next day, on Tuesday, Rutte went further, stating that the decision was part of the process of bringing Ukraine closer to NATO. This explains why other Alliance member states, which have traditionally been critical of Ukraine, did not block the decision this time. First and foremost, this concerns Hungary. Viktor Orbán's cabinet has long and consistently opposed Ukraine's integration into both the EU and NATO. This has become part of his electoral

strategy — such statements are made regularly, and each one strengthens his position ahead of the elections.

Why did the Hungarian government, despite its public position, not prevent the adoption of a document that directly contradicts its own statements? The answer is obvious: Donald Trump played a key role. The political dependence of the Hungarian leadership on Washington's position — especially in the context of personal relations with Trump — is well known and documented. This was confirmed by numerous publications in European Truth during Trump's first term, and the topic remains relevant today. The domestic political situation in Hungary is currently less stable, so it is more important than ever for Orbán to maintain US support, and especially Trump's personal sympathy. The summit in The Hague clearly demonstrated this: ***The Hungarian leader is not prepared to go against the position of the American president, even if it concerns issues that were previously considered fundamental, in particular Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic prospects.***

The summit in The Hague ended with a two-and-a-half-hour meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the level of heads of state and government. This was followed by a press conference with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte and a series of statements to the media with the participation of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. These events formally closed the summit, which, according to media estimates, was not only one of the shortest but also one of the most expensive in the history of the Alliance: the organisation cost €183.4 million, which is approximately more than €1 million for every minute of the event. **Such a high cost was due to the special format tailored to Donald Trump's participation.** As a result, NATO organizers significantly shortened the summit agenda, limited the final document to one page, and tailored the protocol for the American president as much as possible so that he would not leave early. All allies were waiting for Trump to confirm the United States' commitment to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty on collective defense. This issue became particularly acute against the backdrop of warnings from European intelligence agencies and statements by the NATO Secretary General about the possible launch of a new military campaign by Moscow against the Alliance in the next 3-5 years. However, while still in the air aboard Air Force One, Trump said: "There are many interpretations of Article 5. You understand that, right?" Kyiv, on the other hand, expected not only a meeting with Zelensky (which Trump confirmed), but also approval for the sale of weapons to Ukraine — this is what Zelensky tried to achieve at the G7 summit in Canada, but the meeting did not take place at that time.

In addition to the issue of Ukraine, the allies discussed other challenges related to security on the eastern flank. Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof, opening the NATO Public Forum, said: 'This summit is not just about money,' although in reality financial issues and Trump's role dominated the agenda. The American president independently published on the social network Truth Social his correspondence with Mark Rutte, in which the secretary general praised him for his 'bold actions in Iran' and 'new successes in the Alliance.' In response, Rutte noted: "This is a breakthrough. We managed to achieve 5%. Donald, you have achieved what dozens of previous presidents have failed to do." Trump ironically noted that the NATO

summit would be much calmer than the events in Israel and Iran, and hinted that he might have stayed in The Hague longer if he had received more personal praise.⁶

However, Trump's main diplomatic victory was the establishment of a new standard for defence spending — 5% of GDP. Formally, this indicator is not mandatory for everyone, as it is presented as a common goal for allies, not individual countries. The United States and Spain have exceptions to this rule. At the same time, nine countries, including Belgium, Canada, Italy, Montenegro, and Croatia, still do not even meet the 2014 commitment to spend at least 2% of GDP on defence.

It was expected that both Russia and China would be mentioned in the final document as key threats, but due to fears of escalating confrontation with China, the allies settled only on Russia, recognising it as the main long-term threat to Euro-Atlantic security, but not as an aggressor. Importantly, this wording was supported by the Trump administration.

As for Ukraine, its mention in the declaration was preserved thanks to the joint efforts of the partners. The Alliance recognised that support for the Ukrainian Armed Forces could be taken into account in the defence budgets of the allies, which is beneficial for countries with small armies, such as Luxembourg and Belgium, as it helps them formally achieve the 5% target. The document clearly states: 'Allies reaffirm their unwavering sovereign commitments to support Ukraine, whose security is a contribution to our security.' **Ukraine remained on the sidelines of this summit with an uncertain future. The issue of Ukraine's membership in NATO has effectively disappeared from the agenda.** In 2023–2024, the topic was actively discussed, but at this summit it was not mentioned either in documents or in speeches. The President of Ukraine participated only in official events and evenings within the framework of the summit. Even the joint briefing with Rutte, Koszta and von der Leyen did not contain any mention of Ukraine's accession.

⁶ Задовольнити Трампа: чотири головні проблеми саміту НАТО в Гаазі, які вплинуть на Україну. 25.06.2025. <https://tsn.ua/ukrayina/zadovolnyty-trampa-chotyry-holovni-problemy-samitu-nato-v-haazi-iaki-vplynut-na-ukrayinu-2856599.html>