




Allied Burden Sharing

The United States Shoulders an Unsustainable Weight

A Marathon Initiative Infographics Series

J.C. Ellis

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The purpose of the Marathon Initiative Infographics Series is to drive home urgent geostrategic realities in an intuitive, visual way for an audience of engaged citizens.

America's allies are heavily reliant on the United States for security. These dependencies belie the potential power of our partners – and America's growing fiscal constraints.

- 1 Russia has moved to a war footing and is increasing its pressure on NATO's eastern flank.
- 2 The burden for defending this strategic frontier continues to fall disproportionately on the United States, despite Europe's latent military potential.
- 3 In the Indo-Pacific, U.S. allies and partners are failing to keep pace with China's military build-up, forcing the United States to commit more resources to check Chinese power in this theater.
- 4 Inequitable burden sharing is unsustainable, given America's deepening fiscal constraints and growing pressures from rival powers in multiple regions.

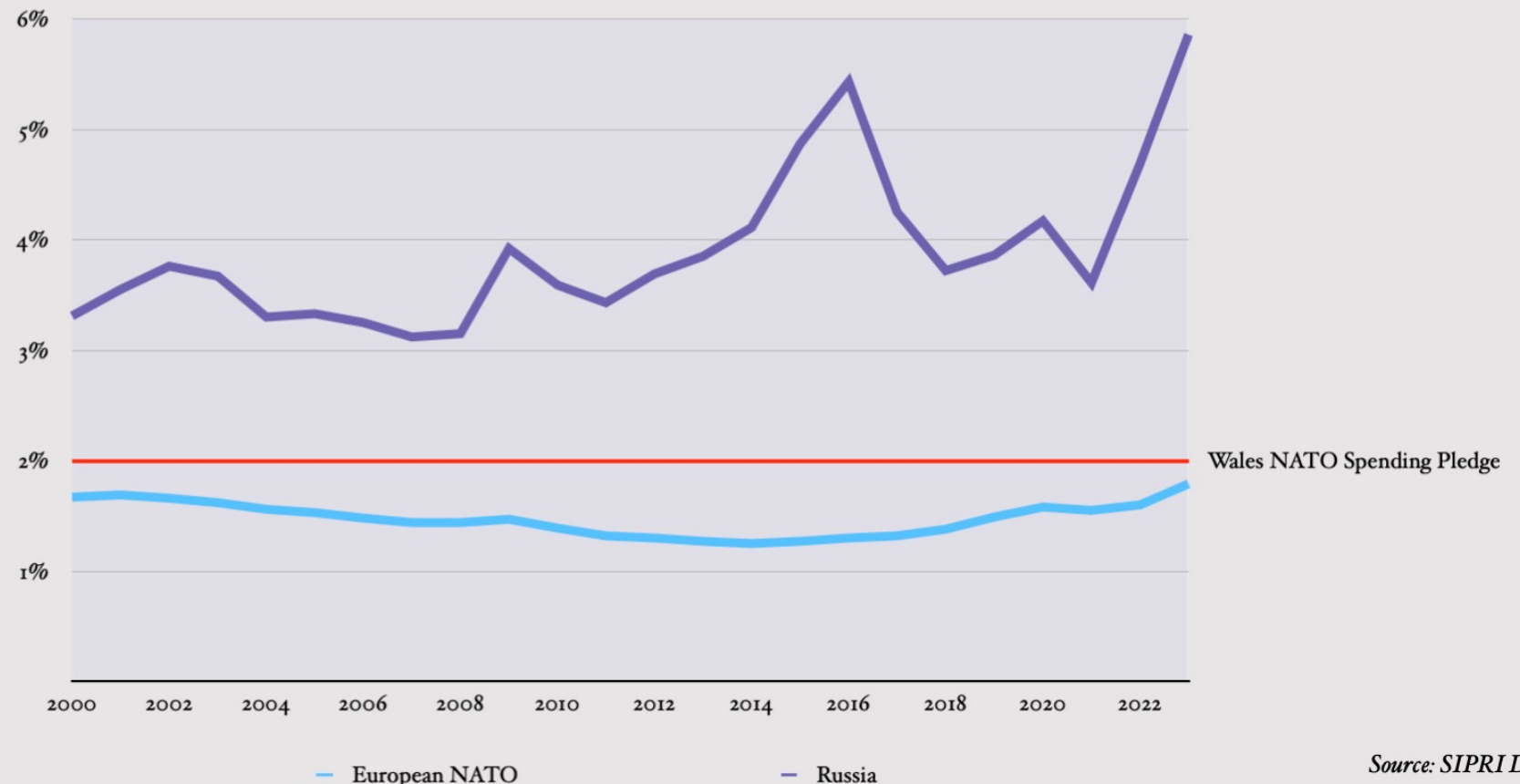
To avoid military overstretch and keep pace with our adversaries, America's European and Asian allies must assume greater responsibility for the security of their neighborhoods.

Failure to rebalance collective security burdens will erode deterrence and encourage aggression from Russia, China and Iran.

Russia Emphasizes Military Force, while Europe Lodges a Tepid Response.

- Amid the war in Ukraine, Russia is making long-term investments in its military and placing its economy on a war footing.
- Viewed in aggregate, European NATO has failed to respond with adequate investment in defense.

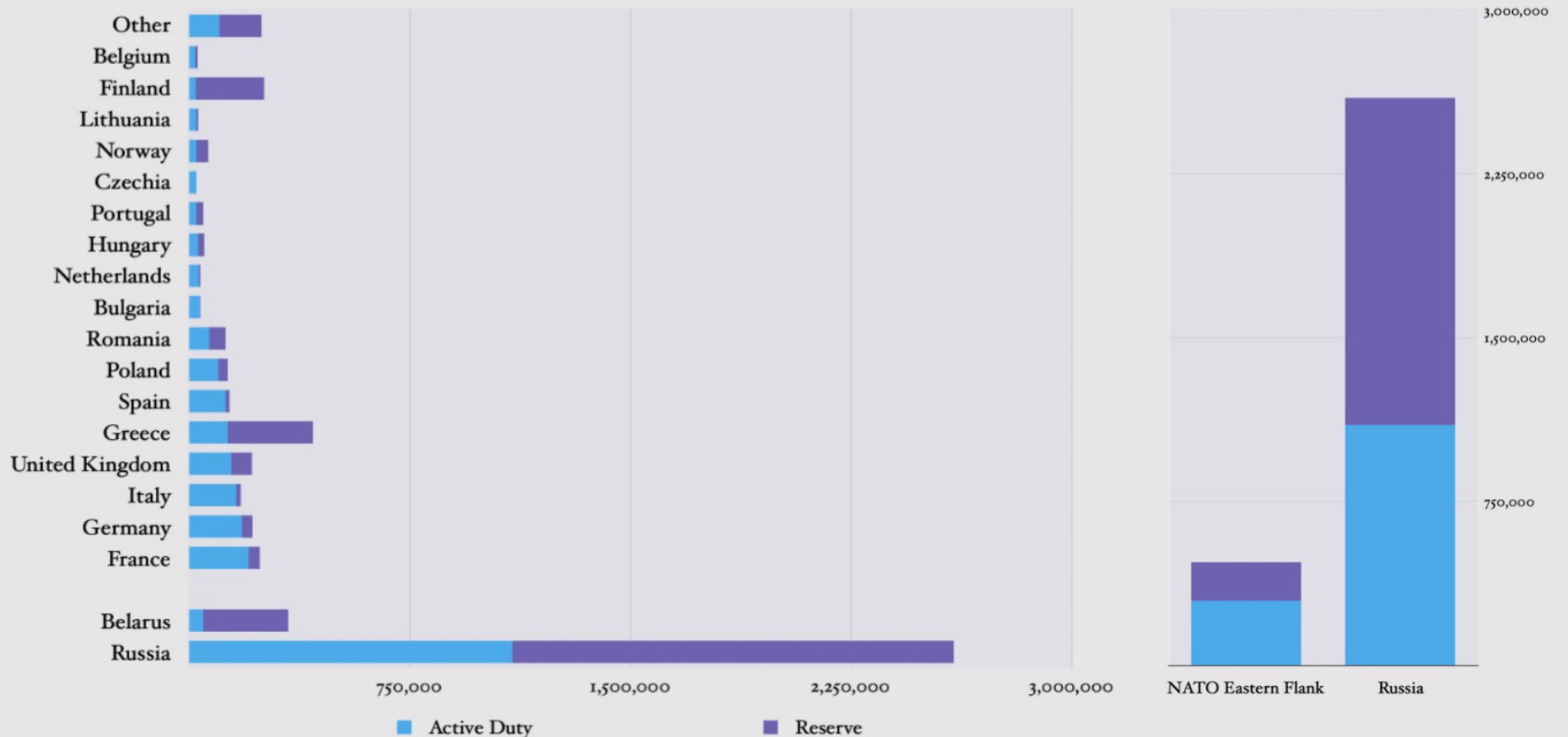
Russia vs. European NATO Defense Spending as Percent of GDP



Europe Faces Decisive Manpower Disadvantages, Especially along its Critical Eastern Flank.

- Disparities in manpower undermine NATO's ability to deter Russian aggression.

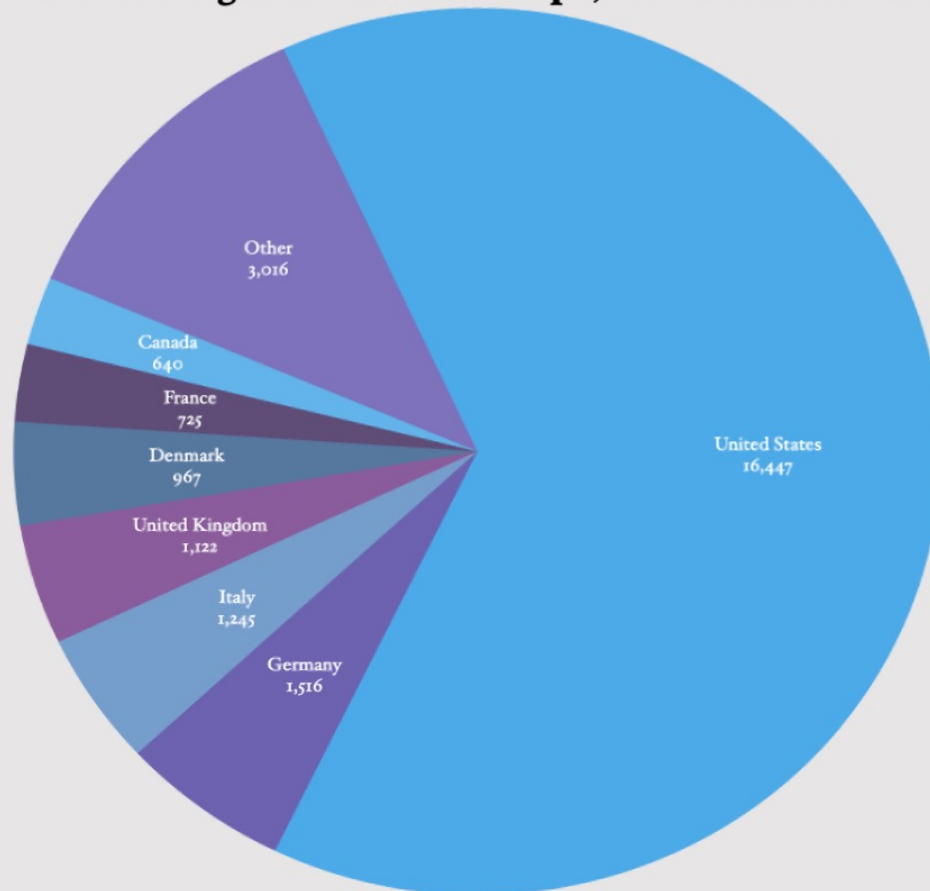
Russia vs. European NATO Manpower



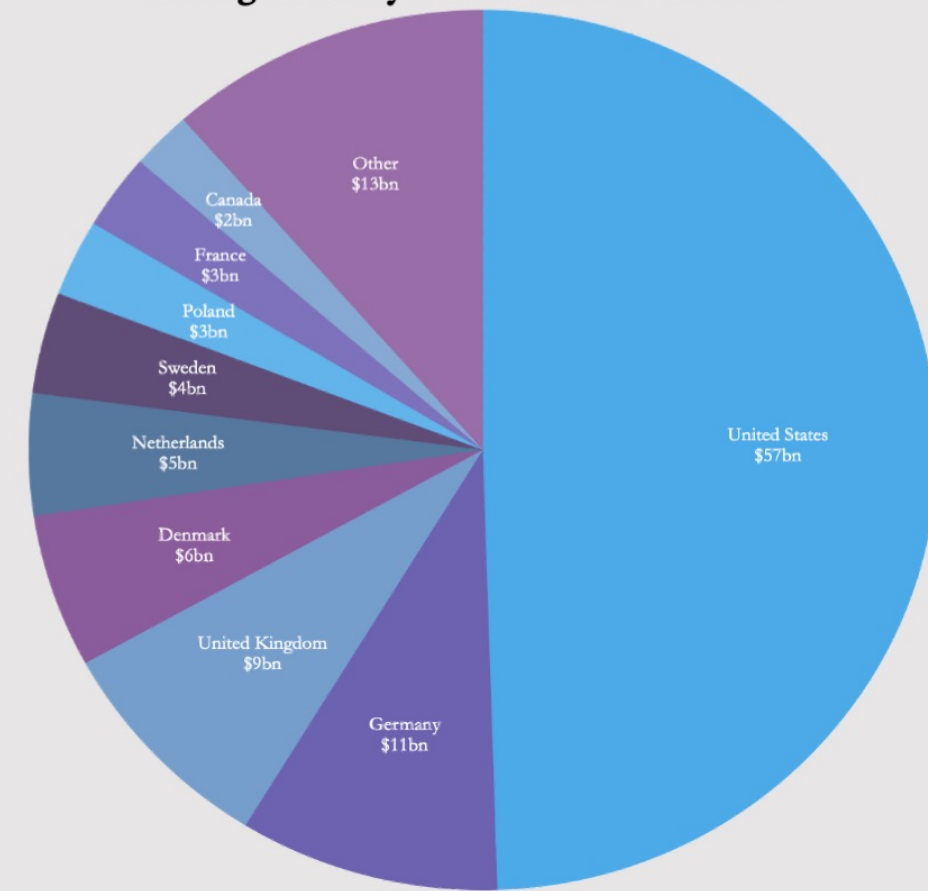
Washington Bears the Brunt of Defending NATO's Eastern Flank.

- NATO's response to the war in Ukraine illustrates Europe's continuing dependency on the United States to provide the money and arms to reinforce security.

Forces Surged to Eastern Europe, Feb 2022 to Feb 2023



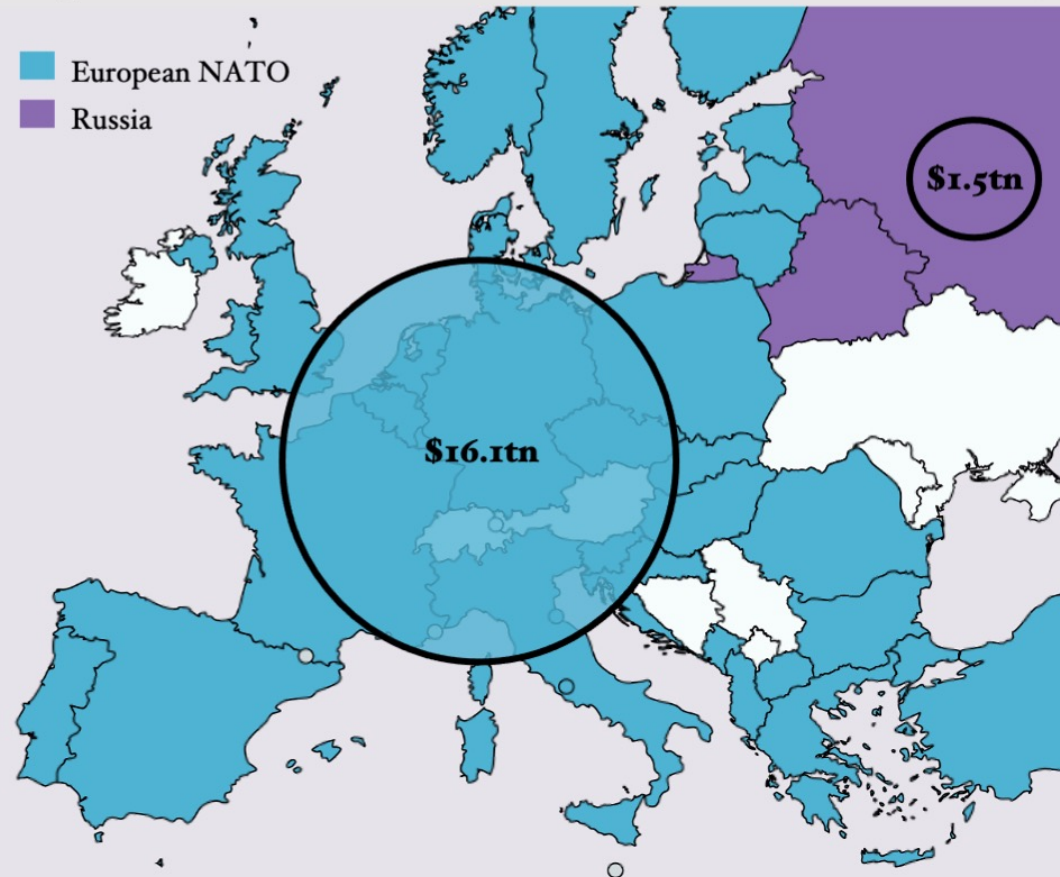
Leading Military Aid Donors to Ukraine



Europe has the Economic Base to Provide More for Regional Defense.

- The key challenges are integrating various national defense industrial bases (DIB), coordinating European weapons procurement, and positioning resources along the eastern flank.

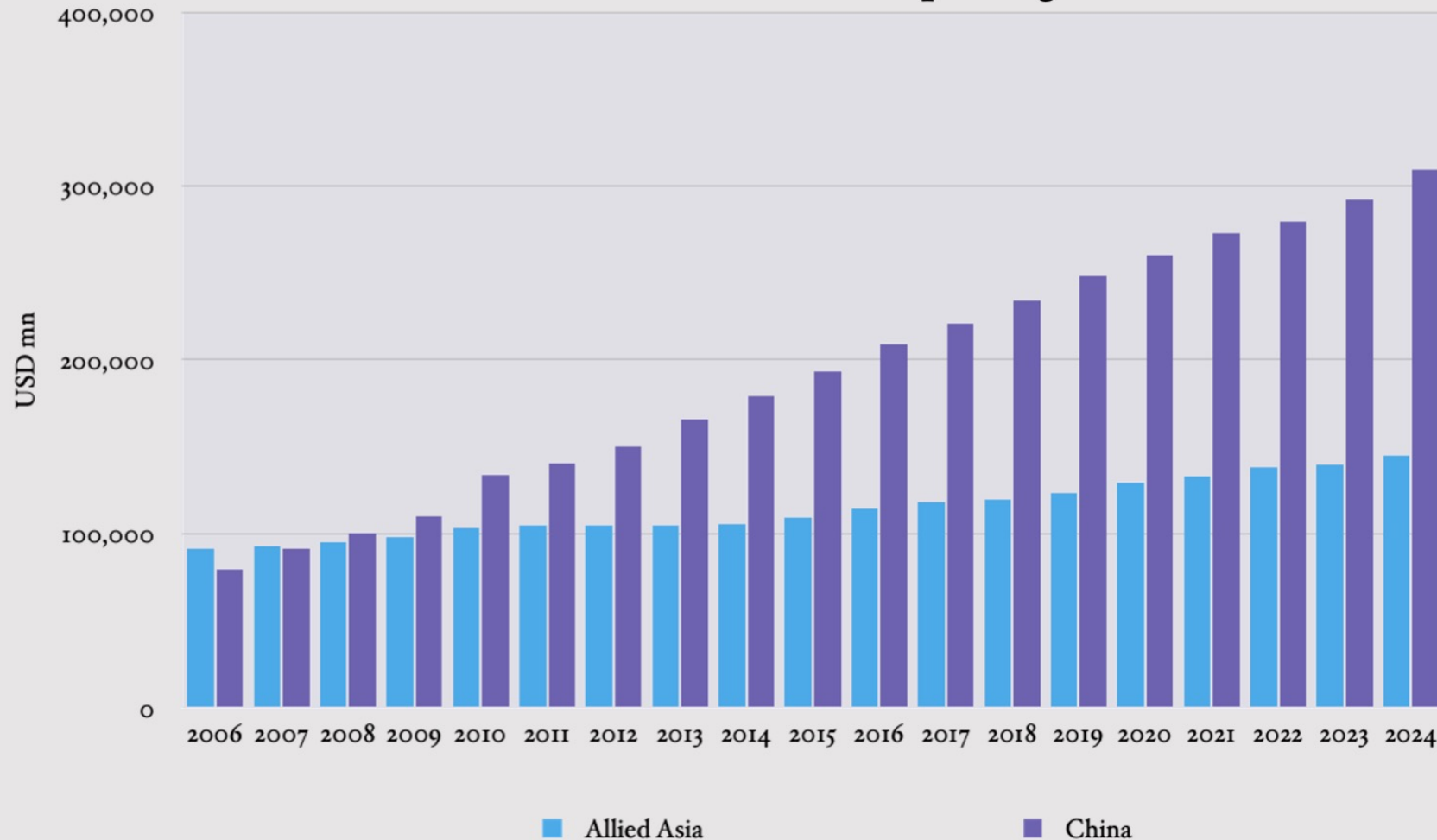
Russia v. European NATO Gross Domestic Product, constant 2015 USD



Meanwhile in Asia, China's Increasing Power Places Further Demands on U.S. Resources.

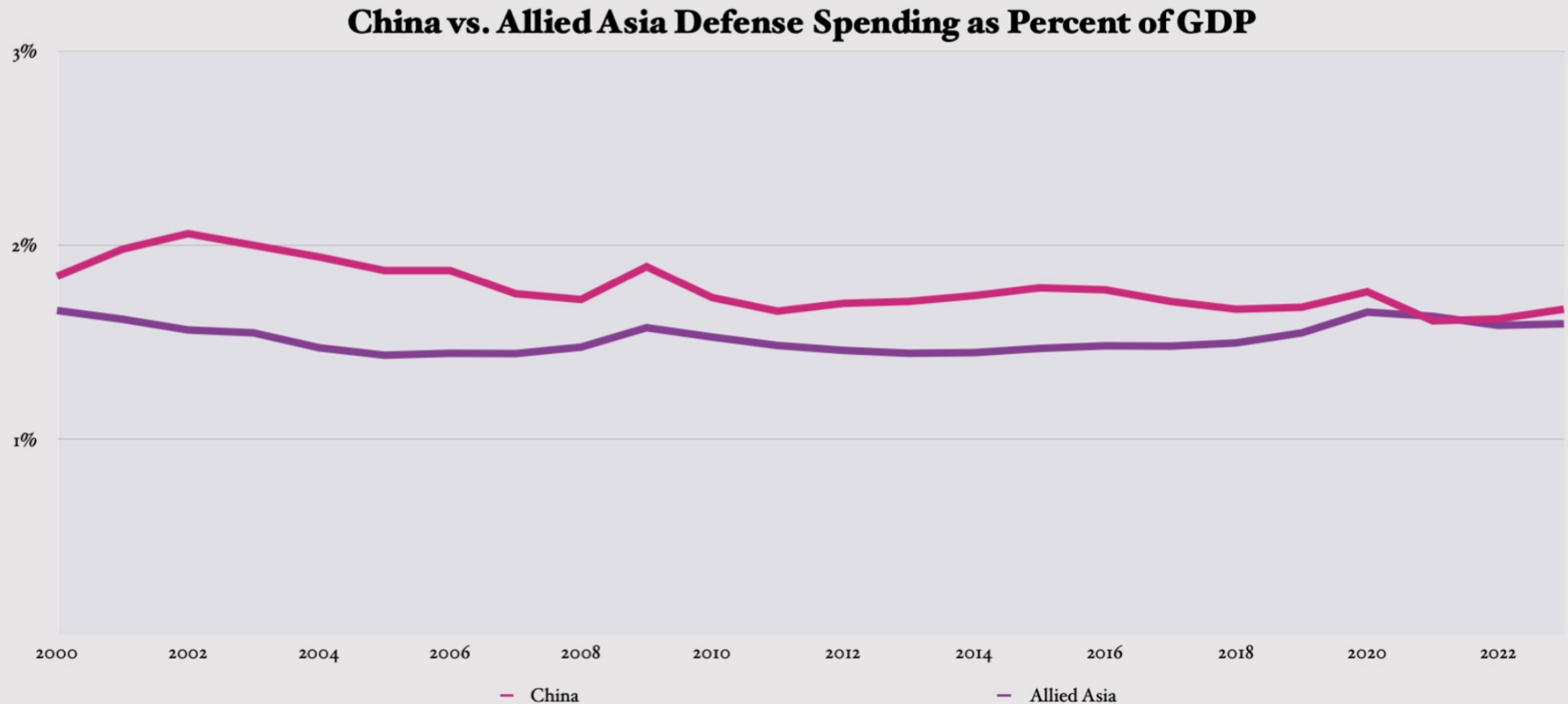
- America's Indo-Pacific allies rely on Washington to bridge the gulf in regional military power.

China vs. Allied Asia Defense Spending



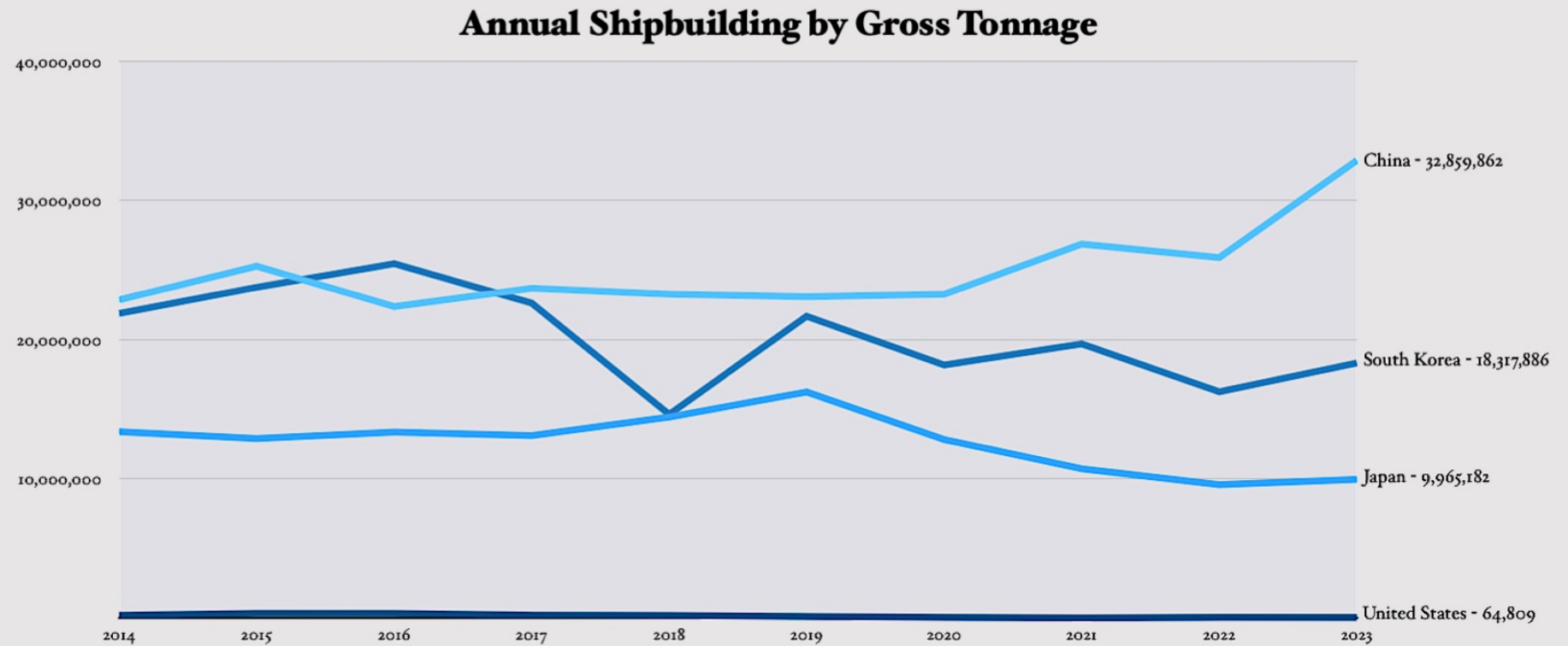
To keep pace with China, America's Asian allies need to redouble their defense efforts.

- While Allied Asia and China spend a similar share on military power, China's economy is more than twice as large as that of Allied Asia combined.



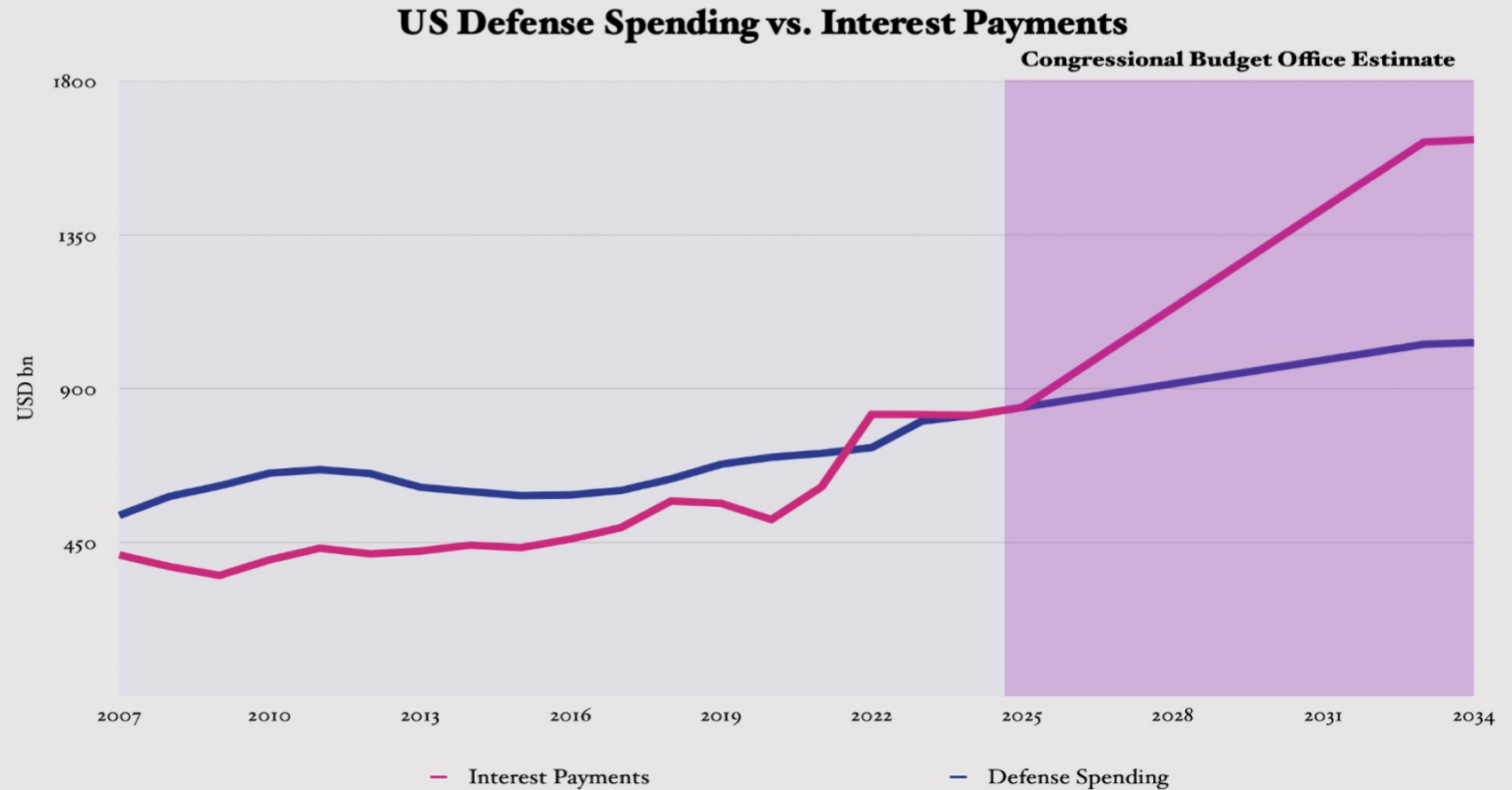
The United States Lags Far Behind China in Shipbuilding.

- This deficit undermines America's ability to maintain naval dominance and project power in key strategic regions, particularly the Indo-Pacific.



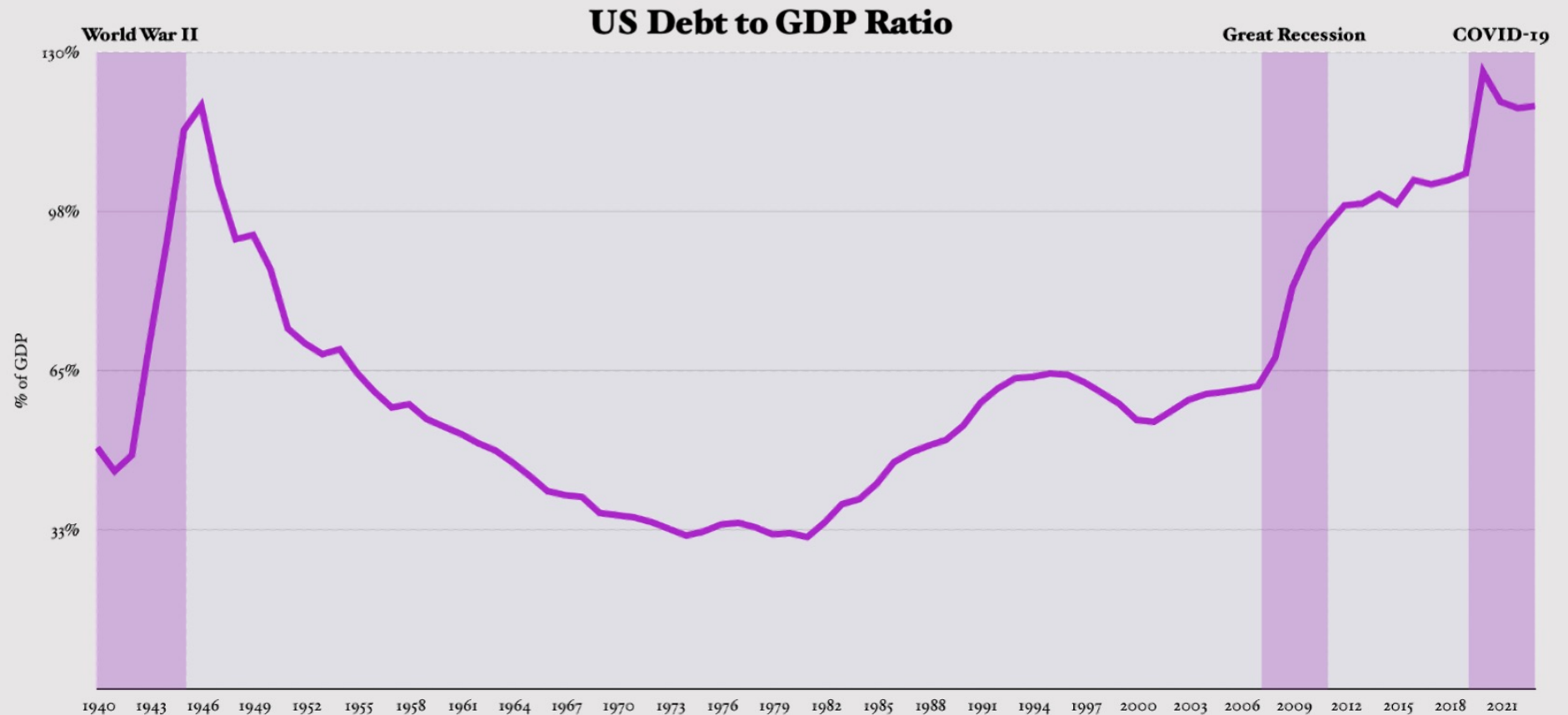
The Debt Burden Constrains America's Ability to Increase Defense Spending.

- Over the next decade, interest on the national debt will crowd out defense spending.



The United States Cannot Avoid Tradeoffs through Continued Deficit Spending.

- America is already carrying WW2-levels of debt. Continued high deficit spending risks worsening the national debt, stoking inflationary pressures, and negatively impacting U.S. economic growth.



Burden sharing arrangements must evolve to reflect American constraints and our allies' latent power.

- Europe's dependence on the United States has only increased since Russia's full-scale invasion.
- China's military build-up demands greater attention from the United States and more defense spending from our Asian allies.
- Fiscal limitations necessitate trade-offs in American strategy.
- The United States and its allies must work together to reinforce deterrence, discourage aggression and avoid U.S. military overstretch.