# Marist SV – Nova Negative v1

#### Sophie and I negate Resolved: The European Union should join the Belt and Road Initiative.

## Contention 1 is Infrastructure

#### Wendy Wu indicated on September 29 that:

Wendy Wu, 9-29-2019 "Is the EU running out of patience with China’s trade war obsession?," South China Morning Post, https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3030771/chinas-preoccupation-us-trade-war-has-european-union-officials, Date Accessed 10-2-2019 // JM

The European Union is becoming increasingly frustrated at its inability to engage Beijing in economic and trade discussions due to the demands of the [US-China trade war](https://www.scmp.com/topics/us-china-trade-war) , diplomatic observers say. The tariff dispute, which is nearing its 15th month, has already seen a dozen rounds of high-level talks between the protagonists and left Chinese officials too busy to meet their counterparts in [Brussels](https://www.scmp.com/topics/china-eu-relations) . With the next round of negotiations set to take place in Washington in the coming weeks, Beijing recently postponed a planned meeting with the EU on reforming the World Trade Organisation from this month until next, the sources said. China and the EU set up a joint vice-ministerial-level working group to discuss the reforms in June last year, but since then have held just two meetings. EU officials have said in the past that their discussions with China on reforms to the WTO have lacked substance and that as far as they were concerned, the two sides remain far apart. “It is truly frustrating to see Chinese delegations on a pilgrimage to Washington, only to see them getting hammered and tariffs raised,” a diplomatic source said on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the issue. China’s vice-minister for finance Liao Min last week led a delegation to the US in preparation for the upcoming top-level talks between Chinese Vice-Premier Liu He and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. During the visit of German Chancellor [Angela Merkel](https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3025376/german-chancellor-angela-merkel-expected-use-china-visit-push) to Beijing in early September, China’s leaders, including President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang, promised to continue to open up the nation’s economy. But behind the scenes, diplomats and business representatives are running out of patience with the slow progress on reform. China’s vice-minister for finance Liao Min last week led a delegation to the US in preparation for the upcoming top-level talks between Chinese Vice-Premier Liu He and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. During the visit of German Chancellor [Angela Merkel](https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3025376/german-chancellor-angela-merkel-expected-use-china-visit-push) to Beijing in early September, China’s leaders, including President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang, promised to continue to open up the nation’s economy. But behind the scenes, diplomats and business representatives are running out of patience with the slow progress on reform. Beijing has also been keeping a close eye on the progress of the ongoing talks between the EU, United States and Japan, at which it has frequently been an unnamed target. With the EU facing the threat of recession Brussels is unlikely to resist the draw of China’s vast markets. Meanwhile, the EU remains China’s biggest export market and is a larger destination for its capital than the US. As a result of the trade war, the 10-member [Association of Southeast Asian Nations](https://www.scmp.com/topics/asean) overtook the US as China’s second-largest trading partner in the first half of the year. The first source said that China was facing the challenge of how to resolve its disputes with the US while continuing to open up to “trusted partners”. But if it failed to make a breakthrough in its talks on trade and investment with the current leadership of the EU it would be a lost opportunity. “The new one will be less active on China in the first six months, and possibly be even more assertive,” he said.

#### That’s why Michael Peel indicated on September 27 that:

Michael Peel, 9-27-2019, "Japan and EU sign deal in riposte to China’s Belt and Road," Financial Times, https://www.ft.com/content/dd14ce1e-e11d-11e9-9743-db5a370481bc, Date Accessed 10-2-2019 // JM

The EU and Japan have signed an ambitious deal to build infrastructure and set development standards in joint projects around the world, in [opposition] a riposte to China’s far-reaching Belt and Road Initiative. The so-called connectivity partnership will cover sectors from transport to digital industries as part of a wider effort to revive multilateral co-operation in the face of the US withdrawal from international agreements such as the Iran nuclear deal and the Paris climate change accord. The agreement was signed in Brussels on Friday by Shinzo Abe, Japan’s prime minister, and Jean-Claude Juncker, European Commission president. It dovetails with EU plans to deploy €60bn to leverage investments of many times that value to improve ties between Europe and Asia.  Mr Abe called the growing co-operation between Brussels and Tokyo, which includes economic and strategic partnerships, a “resounding declaration” at a time when “the values and principles we have held dear could waver or drift”. Speaking at an event to mark the signing, Mr Abe said: “Whether it be a single road or a single port, when the EU and Japan undertake something, we are able to build sustainable, rules-based connectivity from the Indo-Pacific to the Western Balkans and Africa”. While the agreement does not mention China by name, the overriding idea and the language used to promote the project were clearly crafted with Beijing’s Belt and Road infrastructure-building initiative in mind. The Belt and Road Initiative is short of ‘Chinese characteristics’ The BRI has been endorsed by more than 150 countries and international organisations, including more than half the EU’s 28 member states. But it has faced criticism for being opaque, falling short on environmental standards and leaving some participant countries heavily indebted. China has defended its approach. The EU-Japan agreement calls for “transparent procurement practices, the ensuring of debt sustainability and the high standards of economic, fiscal, financial, social and environmental sustainability”.  Mr Juncker said there was a need for infrastructure that could be built “without mountains of debt” or dependence on “a single country”.  One EU diplomat suggested examples of the collaboration could include EU financing for Japanese companies that want to use drones to map roads in need of repair in African countries, and Japanese investors funding European renewable energy companies keen to expand in south-east Asia.  The infrastructure drive is also part of a wider EU push to transform itself from “payer to player” — to better use the bloc’s economic heft in trade, aid and investment to achieve strategic foreign policy goals.  The bloc has begun to take a tougher approach to China rise, making a landmark declaration earlier this year that Beijing was a “systemic rival” in some areas, as well as competitor or potential partner in others.

#### However, this deal is mutually exclusive with the BRI because it focuses on renewable energy as Robin Emmott explains

Robin Emmott, 9-27-2019, "In counterweight to China, EU, Japan sign deal to link Asia," U.S., https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-japan/in-counterweight-to-china-eu-japan-sign-deal-to-link-asia-idUSKBN1WC0U3, Date Accessed 10-2-2019 // JM

The European Union and Japan signed an infrastructure deal on Friday to coordinate transport, energy and digital projects linking Europe and Asia, seeking an alternative to Chinese largesse that has raised suspicion in Brussels and Tokyo. The accord, signed by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, formalizes Japan’s involvement in a new EU-Asia “connectivity” plan that is set to be backed by a 60 billion euro ($65.48 billion) EU guarantee fund, development banks and private investors. “Whether it be a single road or a single port, when the EU and Japan undertake something, we are able to build sustainable, rules-based connectivity from the Indo-Pacific to the Western Balkans and Africa,” Abe told an EU-Asia forum in Brussels. Since 2013, China has launched construction projects across more than 60 countries, known as the Belt and Road Initiative, seeking a network of land and sea links with Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa. “The sea route that leads to the Mediterranean and the Atlantic must be open,” he added, referring to the need to prevent projects funded by Beijing and its vast foreign exchange reserves dominating transport routes. Juncker also vowed to help build infrastructure “without mountains of debt” or a reliance “on a single country”. That was a veiled reference to Chinese-financed projects that have sent debts in some central Asian and Balkan countries soaring after they embarked on building bridges, roads and tunnels they could ill-afford. The EU and Japan also want stricter environmental standards. EU officials said they are concerned about what they see as a Chinese investment model which lends to countries for projects they may not need, making them reliant on China once under way. Poor countries across Asia and Africa have seized on the attractive Chinese loans. A Chinese-funded highway to link Montenegro’s Adriatic coast to landlocked neighbor Serbia has so indebted Montenegro that the International Monetary Fund has told the country it cannot afford to finish the project. Although not all European and Japanese money will be spent in Asia, the Commission’s strategy makes spending on infrastructure links with Asia official EU policy involving the EU’s common budget. In their 10-point accord, the EU and Japan promised to pay “utmost attention” to countries’ “fiscal capacity and debt-sustainability”.

#### And Sharma indicated on October 1st that:

Mihir Sharma, 10-1-2019, "Japan and Europe Can Build Their Own Silk Road," Bloomberg, https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-10-01/japan-and-europe-can-finance-rival-to-china-s-belt-and-road, Date Accessed 10-2-2019 // JM

But Japan’s approach so far has failed on three counts. It hasn’t expanded sufficiently into Africa. It hasn’t built a brand with international significance to compare with the BRI. And it hasn’t made enough of a case for the values that it embeds. Brussels can help with all three. Buy-in from the European Commission needs to be followed up by a hard look at the post-2008 regulations and requirements that prevent pools of European capital from leaving the continent. If Europe is serious about competing with China in the emerging world, its private sector needs to be incentivized to take risks there. This isn’t just about power politics, or future income streams, or common economic benefits. Allowing the BRI to water down environmental standards for global infrastructure -- letting poor countries [build](https://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/11388-Why-is-Pakistan-still-pursuing-coal-) white-elephant thermal power plants for lack of financing for renewable energy, for example -- would render Europe’s commitment to fighting climate change virtually meaningless. Above all, building infrastructure is about values. Financing projects that are sustainable, have buy-in from local communities, account for gender and other social deprivations, and respect the rule of law and global norms is the best way to proselytize for and defend the values that Japan, Europe -- and countries such as India -- have in common.

#### Lili Pike concludes on September 10 the impact would be devastating. They argue that:

Lili Pike, 9-10-2019, "Belt and Road countries will make or break the Paris Agreement ," No Publication, https://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/11509-Belt-and-Road-countries-will-make-or-break-the-Paris-Agreement-, Date Accessed 10-2-2019 // JM

In the coming decades, BRI countries will contribute a much ﻿larger share of global emissions, the study finds. ﻿ “From a forward-looking perspective,” write the authors, “the biggest climate risk and opportunity lies in our ability ﻿to support a low-carbon development pathway for the group of more than 120 nations”. ﻿ Considering historical precedents, in the 17 key countries studied carbon emissions are forecast to grow from 14% of the global annual total in 2015 to 44% in 2050, if the rest of the world follows the 2C pathway established in Paris. According to the report, these countries account for almost half of the total emissions from BRI countries. The ways ahead For the greater group of 126 countries signed onto the BRI, emissions are projected to grow from 28% in 2015 to 66% in 2050. If they follow the most carbon-intensive growth paths in history, these countries could bring about 2.7C of warming even if the rest of the world meets the 2C target. “What this report highlights loud and clear,” said Elizabeth Losos, a senior fellow at Duke University, “is if we don’t really start taking this into account both from the side of China as a lender but also the countries as recipients, we are going to bust through 2C.”

#### Alan Buis quantifies in 2019 that due to lower crops yields and increased natural disasters

Alan Buis, 6-19-2019, "A Degree of Concern: Why Global Temperatures Matter – Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet," Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet, https://climate.nasa.gov/news/2865/a-degree-of-concern-why-global-temperatures-matter/, Date Accessed 10-4-2019 // JM

At 1.5 degrees Celsius warming, the report projects that climate-related risks to human health, livelihoods, food security, human security, water supply and economic growth will all increase, and will increase even more at 2 degrees warming. Disadvantaged and vulnerable populations, some indigenous peoples and communities with livelihoods based on agriculture or coastal resources will be at the highest risk. Regions at highest risk include Arctic ecosystems, dryland regions, small-island developing states and the least developed countries. Some populations will see increased poverty and disadvantages. Limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius could reduce the number of people susceptible to climate-related poverty risks by as much as several hundred million by 2050. Heat-Related Illness and Mortality – The risk of heat-related illness and death will be lower at 1.5 degrees Celsius warming than at 2 degrees, finds the report. Cities will experience the worst impacts of heatwaves due to the urban heat island effect, which keeps them warmer than surrounding rural areas. Impacts will vary by region due to many factors such as the ability of populations to adjust to changes in their environment, vulnerability of populations, their human-made surroundings and access to air conditioning. The elderly, children, women, those with chronic diseases and people taking certain medications will be at highest risk. Vector-Borne Diseases — More people will die from vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue fever, with risks increasing more at 2 degrees warming, according to the report. Food Security — Food security is expected to be reduced at 2 degrees Celsius warming compared to 1.5 degrees, say the report authors, with the largest risks emerging in the African Sahel, the Mediterranean, Central Europe, the Amazon, and Western and Southern Africa. Yields for such crops as maize, rice, wheat and other cereal crops will be smaller at 2 degrees warming than at 1.5 degrees, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and Central and South America. For example, global maize crop yields will be about 5 percent lower at 2 degrees warming. Rice and wheat will become less nutritious. Projected food availability will be less at 2 degrees Celsius warming than at 1.5 degrees in Southern Africa, the Mediterranean, the Sahel, Central Europe and the Amazon. Seven to 10 percent of rangeland livestock will be lost at about 2 degrees Celsius warming. Economic Impacts — Risks to global economic growth from climate change impacts will be lower at 1.5 degrees Celsius than at 2 degrees by 2100, with the biggest impacts expected in the tropics and Southern Hemisphere subtropics, according to the report. In the United States, economic damages from climate change are projected to be large, with one 2017 study concluding the United States could lose 2.3 percent of its Gross Domestic Product for each degree Celsius increase in global warming. To put that into perspective, that would amount to more than $446 billion based on U.S. Gross Domestic Product of $19.39 trillion in 2017. Small Islands and Coastal and Low-lying Areas – The report says these areas will see multiple climate-related risks at 1.5 degrees Celsius warming, with these risks increasing further at 2 degrees warming. These risks include sea level rise, leading to coastal flooding and erosion; changes to the salinity of coastal groundwater supplies, resulting in freshwater stress; risks to marine ecosystems, such as mass coral bleaching and die-offs; and more intense tropical cyclones. Limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius will mean 40,000 less people will see their land inundated by 2150.

## Contention 2 is NATO

#### The EU joining the BRI will destroy NATO in two ways

#### First is military mobility. Robbie Gramer writes in March that

Robbie Gramer, 3-20-2019, Trump Wants NATO’s Eyes on China, Foreign Policy, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/20/us-wants-nato-to-focus-on-china-threat-critical-infrastructure-political-military-huawei-transatlantic-tensions/>, Date Accessed 9-12-2019 // JM

“The United States has been very clear that we are concerned with certain foreign investment in and control over critical infrastructure, including telecommunications and transportation elements,” the spokeswoman said. “These investments represent a challenge to transatlantic security, including to institutions like NATO.” U.S. officials also worry that China is gaining too many commercial footholds in some of Europe’s largest and most important ports, including Rotterdam, Antwerp, Hamburg, and Piraeus, that it could use to wield political influence over European governments. In its 2018 National Security Strategy, the Trump administration identified Russia and China as top threats to global order, marking a new shift away from the yearslong fight against terrorism as Washington’s top national security priority. In a tour of Central Europe last month, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo warned countries against forging closer ties with Moscow and Beijing, citing Huawei as an example of China’s tactic of masking geopolitical aims in commercial ventures. “Beijing’s handshake sometimes comes with strings, strings that will leave Hungary indebted both politically and economically,” he said during a stop in Budapest. The United States has also threatened to curb intelligence cooperation with allies that allowed Huawei to build up new mobile internet infrastructure. But the warnings may have fallen on deaf ears, as Germany, Britain, and other European countries signal they have no intention of banning Huawei from their 5G networks. European officials said U.S. intelligence briefings with allies on Huawei did not offer enough proof that Beijing would use the company to steal information, according to the [New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/17/us/politics/huawei-ban.html). Some European countries, bristling from Trump’s repeated public broadsides against them on trade and defense issues, seem determined to resist U.S. pressure on the China issue. On Tuesday, Italy became the first European country to sign on to China’s Belt and Road Initiative, an ambitious trillion-dollar infrastructure investment project to connect China with Europe, Eurasia, and Africa. Growing U.S. concerns come as the EU, coordinating with NATO, is pushing its member states to boost infrastructure projects across Europe for military means. It aims to minimize logistical roadblocks for militaries to quickly deploy and confront a Russian invasion. Though the possibility of a full-fledged conflict with Russia remains remote, defense planners worry NATO members aren’t equipped to support quickly moving military columns in any worst-case scenario. The projects include upgrading roads and bridges to support the weight of tanks and other heavy military equipment, preparing ports to handle a surge in military supplies, and ensuring each member country has permission to move its military through its neighbors’ roads and airspace. The so-called military mobility initiatives center around the potential threat posed by Russia, but Western defense officials want policymakers to assess how Chinese investments in ports and infrastructure could hamper their plans in the event of a conflict.

#### Second is American backlash. Specifically, this retaliation comes in the form of the US decreasing contributions toward NATO as Stephan Walt writes in 2016 that as a result of the EU turning their back on the US

Stephan Walt, 2016, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/EUGS\_Opinion\_1\_Walt\_0.pdf, Date Accessed 9-12-2019 // WS

A growing proportion of US military power will be assigned to Asia, while American officials will devote more time and attention to managing strategic partnerships there. Having once focused on preventing Germany and the Soviet Union from dominating Europe, the US will now strive to keep China from dominating Asia. Europe will play little or no role in this effort. China is not a threat to Europe, meaning European states have no incentive to balance against it. On the contrary, they will be eager to invest in China and some may be happy to sell Beijing whatever it might desire, perhaps even sophisticated weaponry. Consequently, US leaders will be increasingly reluctant to subsidise Europe’s defence or guarantee its security, especially if European companies are helping China grow stronger.

#### These two reasons are problematic as The Economist reports in March that as a result there would be gaps in military capabilities and the EU would be forced to

The Economist, 3-14-19, https://www.economist.com/technology-quarterly/2019/03/14/what-would-happen-if-america-left-europe-to-fend-for-itself, Date Accessed 9-13-2019 // WS

There would be gaps in capabilities, too. How bad these were would depend on the mission, and how many operations were under way at the same time. The European-led interventions in Libya and Mali exposed dependence on America in vital areas such as air-to-air refuelling and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. A detailed look at the sort of scenarios Europe might face would help to identify other gaps, and what it would take to fill them. Bastian Giegerich of the iiss, who is starting to work on such assessments, reckons that realistically the gap-filling could take 15 years or so. That is a long time for places like Poland and the Baltic countries that feel under threat. Fear and mistrust could quickly conspire to make narrow national interests trump efforts to maintain European unity. Hence a second, perhaps likelier, version of what might follow an American withdrawal: Europe Divided. It is these games of mistrust that the American security guarantee has largely helped to avoid. They could all too easily resurface. “Establishing a purely European defence”, warns Michael Rühle, a long-time nato official, “[which] would overwhelm the Europeans politically, financially and militarily.”

#### There are two impacts

#### The first is a welfare spending tradeoff. Since The EU would be forced to fill the new defense gap and increase their own defense spending it would directly trade off with their welfare expenditures as Ted Galen writes that the EU is

Ted Galen, 7-12-2010, "U.S. Defense Spending Subsidizes European Free-Riding Welfare States," Cato Institute, https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/us-defense-spending-subsidizes-european-freeriding-welfare-states, Date Accessed 9-13-2019 // WS

Most other NATO governments appear to have implicitly made similar calculations. They are reducing their militaries to skeletal size and increasingly rely[ing] on the U.S. to protect their security. But it gets worse. Instead of being grateful to [the] U.S. taxpayers for [is]enabling European welfare states to persist without the drag of more military spending, European elites miss no opportunity to castigate "American conditions" — a caricature of "cut-throat capitalism."

#### These welfare systems are critical to reducing poverty as the European Commission writes that on average

European Commission, "Poverty and social exclusion," No Publication, https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=751&amp;langId=en, Date Accessed 9-26-2019 // WS

This is still above the target set out in the [Europe 2020 strategy](http://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/european-semester/framework/europe-2020-strategy_en), but several indicators have improved, as shown by 2017 statistics: 22.4% of the EU population are at risk of poverty or social exclusion – this includes 24.9% of all children in Europe, 23.3% of women, 18.2% of those over 65 6.7% of all Europeans still live in severe material deprivation, though their number has significantly decreased 17% of Europeans live on less than 60% of their country's median household income 9.3% of Europeans live in households where no one has a job However, EU citizens have not benefitted from the economic recovery equally. On average, the richest 20% EU households earn five times more than the poorest 20% households Fewer people live in jobless households, but their poverty level remains high or is increasing, reaching around 60% in the EU The share of working poor is increasing in a number of Member States, reaching 9.6% in the EU 30.1% of people with disabilities in the EU were at risk of poverty or social exclusion, compared to 20.9% of people without disabilities Welfare systems in different EU countries are not equally effective. The best system reduced the risk of poverty by 57%, the least effective by 16% (the EU average is 34%)

#### The second impact is war. Heidi Hardt writes in 2018 that currently NATO deters Russian aggression through its Article 5 agreement which states

Heidi Hardt, 7-16-2018, HuffPost, <span class="skimlinks-unlinked">https://www.huffpost.com/entry/opinion-hardt-trump-nato\_n\_5b4c9dfde4b022fdcc5b89d6</span>, Date Accessed 9-12-2019 // WS

Simply put, withdrawing from NATO would make the world less safe. It would likely increase the risk of attacks on allies and reopen the possibility of conflict among them. As part of the original [North Atlantic Treaty](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/stock_publications/20120822_nato_treaty_en_light_2009.pdf), NATO’s critical Article 5 binds together the security of 29 member states; an attack on one state is considered an attack on all of them. The article was intended to act as a deterrent to the Soviet Union, and recent history suggests that it still serves this purpose against Vladimir Putin’s Russia. For example, Estonia, Lithuania and other former Soviet states that are now NATO allies have so far found themselves to be immune to a Russian incursion of ground troops. However, Russia did intervene in Georgia and in Ukraine ― two states seeking NATO membership. These actions suggest that Putin perceives Article 5 as a credible commitment by allies to defend its eastern border. In addition to providing collective defense for its member states, NATO has two other core [tasks](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_56626.htm): crisis management and cooperative security. The organization intervenes in crises around the globe on a scale that no one state has preferred to handle alone. The alliance is engaged in military operations around the world, from Kosovo to Afghanistan, with a renewed commitment to extend the latter operation till 2024. In addition to training Afghan security forces, NATO has committed to a new training mission in Iraq. The alliance also provides a forum for states to work together and teach one another in domains of common interest, such as arms control, counterterrorism and cybersecurity. After Russia’s internationally disputed annexation of Crimea, NATO reprioritized collective defense. The [declaration](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm) that came out of this year’s NATO summit labels Russia as an aggressor that has undermined the “rules-based world order.” The alliance also disincentivizes conflict among its member states. Wars begin for many reasons, from leaders’ misperceptions to miscommunications and information gaps about capabilities and intentions. By regularly engaging in dialogue, NATO diplomats and military leaders ensure that disagreements among allies do not become conflicts ― all while working together to address common security problems. Importantly, the organization provides infrastructure, in the form of political and military headquarters in Belgium, where representatives of the member states communicate every day about security issues. Past studies in international relations have shown that providing such institutionalized cooperation can be an effective means of preventing conflicts. For the U.S. to leave NATO, or for the organization to disband, would bring significant risks to the internal and external security of its member states ― including the U.S. Although the U.S. spends significantly more of its gross domestic product on defense than any other country, it is not exempt from threats to its national security. After the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, NATO invoked Article 5 for the first and only time. The alliance has been key in supporting reductions in nuclear stockpiles. Without the security of NATO’s nuclear umbrella, European states without nuclear weapons might be more likely to consider acquiring them, increasing the risk of an intentional or accidental nuclear attack. Additional security risks could result from the end of NATO. Russia could be more willing to intervene in allied member states to reclaim former Soviet territory ― increasing the spread of authoritarianism and leading to more human rights violations like those observed in Russia. Eliminating allies’ existing cooperation on counterterrorism could increase the risk of terrorist attacks. Similarly, ending cooperation on cyberdefense could make more states susceptible to cyberattacks by Russia, China and non-state actors, including terrorist organizations.

#### This has empirically deterred Russian aggression, however, if NATO were to disband or the US reduce contributions, Hardt continues it

Heidi Hardt, 7-16-2018, HuffPost, <span class="skimlinks-unlinked">https://www.huffpost.com/entry/opinion-hardt-trump-nato\_n\_5b4c9dfde4b022fdcc5b89d6</span>, Date Accessed 9-12-2019 // WS

Simply put, withdrawing from NATO would make the world less safe. It would likely increase the risk of attacks on allies and reopen the possibility of conflict among them. As part of the original [North Atlantic Treaty](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/stock_publications/20120822_nato_treaty_en_light_2009.pdf), NATO’s critical Article 5 binds together the security of 29 member states; an attack on one state is considered an attack on all of them. The article was intended to act as a deterrent to the Soviet Union, and recent history suggests that it still serves this purpose against Vladimir Putin’s Russia. For example, Estonia, Lithuania and other former Soviet states that are now NATO allies have so far found themselves to be immune to a Russian incursion of ground troops. However, Russia did intervene in Georgia and in Ukraine ― two states seeking NATO membership. These actions suggest that Putin perceives Article 5 as a credible commitment by allies to defend its eastern border. In addition to providing collective defense for its member states, NATO has two other core [tasks](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_56626.htm): crisis management and cooperative security. The organization intervenes in crises around the globe on a scale that no one state has preferred to handle alone. The alliance is engaged in military operations around the world, from Kosovo to Afghanistan, with a renewed commitment to extend the latter operation till 2024. In addition to training Afghan security forces, NATO has committed to a new training mission in Iraq. The alliance also provides a forum for states to work together and teach one another in domains of common interest, such as arms control, counterterrorism and cybersecurity. After Russia’s internationally disputed annexation of Crimea, NATO reprioritized collective defense. The [declaration](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm) that came out of this year’s NATO summit labels Russia as an aggressor that has undermined the “rules-based world order.” The alliance also disincentivizes conflict among its member states. Wars begin for many reasons, from leaders’ misperceptions to miscommunications and information gaps about capabilities and intentions. By regularly engaging in dialogue, NATO diplomats and military leaders ensure that disagreements among allies do not become conflicts ― all while working together to address common security problems. Importantly, the organization provides infrastructure, in the form of political and military headquarters in Belgium, where representatives of the member states communicate every day about security issues. Past studies in international relations have shown that providing such institutionalized cooperation can be an effective means of preventing conflicts. For the U.S. to leave NATO, or for the organization to disband, would bring significant risks to the internal and external security of its member states ― including the U.S. Although the U.S. spends significantly more of its gross domestic product on defense than any other country, it is not exempt from threats to its national security. After the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, NATO invoked Article 5 for the first and only time. The alliance has been key in supporting reductions in nuclear stockpiles. Without the security of NATO’s nuclear umbrella, European states without nuclear weapons might be more likely to consider acquiring them, increasing the risk of an intentional or accidental nuclear attack. Additional security risks could result from the end of NATO. Russia could be more willing to intervene in allied member states to reclaim former Soviet territory ― increasing the spread of authoritarianism and leading to more human rights violations like those observed in Russia. Eliminating allies’ existing cooperation on counterterrorism could increase the risk of terrorist attacks. Similarly, ending cooperation on cyberdefense could make more states susceptible to cyberattacks by Russia, China and non-state actors, including terrorist organizations.

#### Specifically, due to NATO’s perceived weakness and inability to respond to an invasion, Moscow would invade the Balticss as Jack Beauchamp writes in 2016 that

Zack Beauchamp, 7-21-2016, "Donald Trump needs to clarify his position on NATO before something scary happens," Vox, https://www.vox.com/2016/7/21/12247074/donald-trump-nato-war, Date Accessed 9-12-2019 // WS

According to [some Russia experts](http://www.interpretermag.com/putin-believes-he-can-win-a-war-with-nato-piontkovsky-says/), Vladimir Putin’s ultimate wish in Europe is to break NATO. The way to do that, according to these scholars, is to expose the Article 5 guarantee as hollow: to show that when push comes to shove, the United States or other large NATO powers wouldn’t actually defend the weaker states. The Baltic states would be the most likely scenario for this to happen. They are very small, they’re right on Russia’s borders, and they aren't really all that important to Western countries' own security. By threatening these states, Russia would force a question: Are the United States, Britain, and France really willing to sacrifice their own soldiers in defense of a tiny state?

#### The impact is death. The Baltic states would force their civilians to fight in a ‘total defense’ strategy if Russia invades. Michael Peck writes that

Michael Peck, 10-21-2017, "If Russia Ever Invades the Baltics, This Is the Plan to Make It as Painful as Possible," National Interest, <a class="vglnk" href="https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/if-russia-ever-invades-the-baltics-the-plan-make-it-painful-22807" Date Accessed 9-12-2019 // WS

The Baltic states have a plan to defend themselves against Russian invasion: mobilize their societies for the struggle. Should Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania go to war, their civilian populations will play a large part in the struggle, according to two RAND Corporation researchers. However, it’s not by choice. “As small countries with little strategic depth and limited human and economic resources, they are increasingly adopting a ‘total defense’ approach to national security, which includes enabling civilians to be able to protect themselves and to also support their nation’s professional armed forces in case of a conflict,” write Marta Kepe and Jan Osburg in [Small Wars Journal](http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/total-defense-how-the-baltic-states-are-integrating-citizenry-into-their-national-security-). The three nations only have a combined population of 6.2 million people, with about twenty-two thousand troops and 450 artillery pieces, but no tanks or jets. Russia can muster 845,000 troops—three hundred thousand in western Russia alone—backed by 2,600 tanks, 5,500 artillery pieces and almost 1,400 warplanes. Planning for a conventional conflict with Russia would be pointless. Despite popular resistance, an authoritarian nation like Russia might simply choose to absorb the costs of occupying all or parts of the Baltic states. Russia’s hybrid-warfare strategy, using a low-cost mixture of local irregulars backed by special forces and some regular troops, would be a relatively low cost way of seizing Baltic territory. In the end, no clever strategy can change the fact that Russia is big and the Baltic states are small. Nonetheless, as in any situation where there is bullying, simply declaring your readiness to stand up to a bigger aggressor just might deter attack—or at least not leave you feeling so helpless.