



By: *Tomorrow's Affairs Staff*

# Will the "big" Europeans be able to win over the "smaller" ones for a joint resistance against Trump?



The leaders of the most influential European countries, taken by surprise by the significant shift in US policy towards Europe, are advocating for a collaborative effort towards autonomy.

But will there be enough supporters in favour of strategic independence in security and the economy?

The Franco-German engine seems to be working strongly and in sync again, this time in opposition to Donald Trump's strategy of turning his back on his European partners, especially on the issue of Ukraine, i.e., continental security.

The Labour government in the UK is very close to the EU leadership duo, which gives a new and powerful impetus to the European response to Trump's new security policy.

The three largest European economies and military powers have an identical stance regarding Washington's efforts to resolve the three-year war in Ukraine through bilateral agreements with Moscow.

Tomorrow's **talks** between British PM Keir Starmer and President Trump in Washington will conclude the first round of European reactions to a series of discriminatory measures taken by the Trump administration against European allies.

They follow French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to President Trump and Friedrich Merz's **announcement** that, as a future German Chancellor, he will prioritise "strengthening Europe as quickly as possible... so it can achieve independence from the USA."

## Harder work lies ahead

While Europe's big three have already given President Trump enough reason to reconsider turning his back on his allies, they may have an even tougher and longer-term task ahead.

They will have to win over other Europeans to their course. This will be a major challenge, as

not all Europeans have experienced the earthquake in transatlantic relations triggered by Trump in the same way.

### Few can expect Viktor Orbán's government to be an ally in building a shared European security front

Hungary, for example, is the first country to embrace Trump's shift, and few can expect Viktor Orbán's government to be an ally in building a shared European security front deprived of the American umbrella.

The head of Hungarian diplomacy, Péter Szijjártó, **called** "war supporters" and "frustrated European leaders" all those who responded to Emmanuel Macron's call last week for urgent agreements regarding a joint response to Washington.

Hungary's neighbour and Orbán's great admirer, Slovakian PM Robert Fico, will not be enthusiastic about the initiative from Paris, Berlin, and London that Europe should focus on its own security capabilities.

## A long list of sceptics

Finally, the list of potential opponents of the strategy offered by the "big" Europeans is even longer. It includes leaders who are in power in certain EU and NATO member states, as well as those who are in opposition but whose influence is steadily growing.

Their policies of sovereignty, loosening of intra-European relations, rigour towards migrants, and especially the restoration of relations with Russia were clearly **demonstrated** in Madrid earlier this month at a meeting called "Make Europe Great Again" by the new European group Patriots for Europe.

### The leaders of the far right will be the loudest and most influential opponent of the pan-European gathering

Among the leaders of the far right at this demonstration of enthusiasm about the inauguration of Donald Trump were Marine Le Pen, then the leader of the Dutch far right Geert Wilders, Italy's Matteo Salvini, and former Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš.

They were joined by the leader of the Austrian far right, Herbert Kickl, albeit via video link, as he was busy at home discussing the formation of the government he aspires to lead because he received the most votes in the parliamentary elections.

This circle will undoubtedly be the loudest and most influential opponent of the pan-European gathering, centred around the idea that the continent needs to thoroughly rethink its relationship with the US, which it can count as less and less of an ally.

## Necessary tangible concessions

The second level of reservations about the strategy favoured by the big three comes from the smaller EU and NATO member states, which are most concerned about their security if major concessions are made to Russia in order to achieve peace in Ukraine.

The Baltic states, including Poland and Romania, all key members of NATO's eastern flank, have linked their security prospects to a solid partnership with the US. It will be very difficult for them to come to terms with the absence of this protective umbrella and, above all, to embark on the path of strengthening their own European security capabilities, which is a long and expensive road.



*If Germany does not want American troops we will very willingly accept partnership with the United States - Andrzej Duda*

On this occasion, Polish President Andrzej Duda strongly **disagreed** with the announcements of future German Chancellor Merz and said that his country would be pleased to accept American troops if Germany no longer wanted them.

"If Germany does not want American troops, does not want partnership with the United States, we will very willingly accept partnership with the United States," said President Duda, who is a political opponent of the ruling bloc and pro-European Prime Minister Donald Tusk.

The Franco-German-British bloc has a very challenging time ahead of it, in which it must offer European partners much more than the rhetoric that Europe needs more security and economic autonomy in its relationship with America.

They probably also have a duty to make tangible concessions to wary partners to convince them that Europe is capable of withstanding the risk that US-Russian plans to end the war in Ukraine already carry.