

# Defence Secretary welcomes Ukraine receiving NATO Enhanced Opportunity Partner status

News story

Ukraine has been granted increased access to opportunities that will help maintain and deepen cooperation between Allies and partners



UK troops deployed on Op Orbital

Ukraine has been granted Enhanced Operating Partner (EOP) status by NATO Allies on Friday 12 June 2020, a decision supported by the UK and welcomed by Defence Secretary Ben Wallace.

The status is part of NATO's Partnership Interoperability Initiative, which aims to maintain and deepen cooperation between Allies and partners that have made significant contributions to NATO-led operations and missions.

The decision means that Ukraine will benefit from increased opportunities to help sustain such contributions, such as enhanced access to interoperability programmes and exercises, and more sharing of information, including lessons learned.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

It is excellent news that Ukraine has been granted NATO Enhanced Opportunity Partner status.

The UK already has a close relationship with Ukraine, where our soldiers have trained over 18,000 personnel, but we now look forward to deepening that cooperation on NATO exercises and operations. We will all benefit from closer association and

increased interoperability – NATO is fortunate to have such a partner.

The UK currently has personnel deployed on Operation Orbital, which is the UK's training mission to Ukraine, established in 2015 following the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia a year earlier. It is a demonstration of the UK's unwavering commitment to Ukraine's independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty. Since 2015, UK personnel have trained over 18,000 members of the Ukraine Armed Forces, making a real difference and saving lives. It was extended by three years to March 2023 by Defence Secretary Ben Wallace in November 2019.

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