

American F-35 Fighter Jets Arrive in Estonia

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Rick Bowmer / AP

Surprise! America's newest and most cutting-edge (reportedly) fighter jets are visiting Estonia. A Twitter account operated by Estonia's mission to NATO posted photos of what appeared to be at least two F-35 aircraft landing at the Ämari airbase in Western Estonia Tuesday afternoon.

The new stealth jets are not considered to be fully operational weapons, and are not in the Baltic region to take part in NATO's air policing mission, which is designed to discourage Russian aircraft from probing the alliance's airspace in the Baltic region, Defense News reported.

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LOOK WHO'S HERE ! [@usairforce](#) F-35 Lightning II deployed to Ämari AB [#Estonia](#)

[#AlliedStrong #StrongEurope pic.twitter.com/sVX9TUJHHW](#)

— estNATO (@estNATO) [April 25, 2017](#)

The F-35 deployment will not be permanent. According to Estonian news outlet ERR will spend a few weeks in Estonia exercising with American and NATO pilots in the region. The aircraft is not expected to see regular service in Europe until at least 2020.

The visit is not the first time high-tech American stealth fighters have visited the Baltic region. In 2015, as part of a broader effort to deter Russia from potential moves against NATO's regional allies, Washington sent older F-22 stealth fighter jets to Estonia.

There has so far not been any major Russian reaction to the visit, though outlets in Moscow have taken notice of their arrival.

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