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# Russia World's No. 4 in Military Spending – Think Tank

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Only the United States, China and India spent more than Russia on their militaries. **Sophia Sandurskaya / Moskva News Agency**

Russia and the rest of the world increased military spending in 2020 despite the coronavirus pandemic, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) think tank said in a new report Monday.

In a second consecutive year of growth, Russia's military expenditure rose 2.5% to $61.7 billion, placing it fourth in the world behind the United States, China and India. Despite the increase, SIPRI said Russia spent significantly less on its military than initially expected.

"Russia's actual military spending in 2020 was 6.6% lower than its initial military budget, a larger shortfall than in previous years," it said.

Global military spending reached almost $2 trillion, up 2.6%, SIPRI said, with the world's top five countries, including the U.K., accounting for 62% of global military spending.

“This was the biggest year-on-year rise in the military burden since the global financial and economic crisis in 2009,” the think tank said.

Russian industry officials said last month that the country’s 2020 arms sales had not been affected by the economic fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic. Customs data from 2020 still showed a 15.6% drop on the previous year in Russia’s so-called “secret” exports of arms and military equipment.

Russia’s other key export industries suffered coronavirus-driven losses in 2020, notably energy giant Gazprom’s gas exports to Europe on the back of collapsing energy prices and demand.

Arms sales play a key role in Russia’s push to increase its geopolitical clout around the world.

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