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Russian Lawmakers Pass Spending Bill With Record Defense Budget

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Russia's State Duma. **duma.gov.ru**

Russia's lower-house State Duma on Thursday approved a three-year budget that allocates a record 13.5 trillion rubles ($133.63 billion) to national defense in 2025, accounting for nearly 40% of the government's total spending.

The defense allocation represents a historically high 6.31% of Russia's projected GDP for next year. It does not include classified expenditures or funds directed toward the war in Ukraine, which are categorized under separate budget items like "national security."

Combined spending on defense and national security will exceed allocations for education, healthcare, social programs and economic development in 2025.

The Duma emphasized social spending in its announcement of the budget, highlighting a planned increase to 6.9 trillion rubles ($68.3 billion) for welfare programs, alongside 6.1 trillion rubles ($60.4 billion) earmarked for "technological leadership."

Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin praised the budget, saying it demonstrates that the political and economic systems established by President Vladimir Putin have "not only withstood sanctions but are working effectively."

The spending bill now heads to the upper-house Federation Council for approval on Wednesday before being signed into law by Putin, who had prioritized defense spending in the government budget.

While defense spending is projected to decline slightly in 2026 and 2027, to 12.8 trillion rubles ($126.7 billion) and 13.1 trillion rubles ($129.7 billion), the figures suggest Russia's economy will remain on a war footing for the foreseeable future.

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