

France and Germany are at loggerheads over military aid to Ukraine. A summit in France made things worse (The Economist)

Behind pay wall: [France and Germany are at loggerheads over military aid to Ukraine \(economist.com\)](https://www.economist.com)



Abstract:

France and Germany are in disagreement over military assistance to Ukraine, exacerbated by a recent summit in France. President Emmanuel Macron's push for a robust stance against Russia, including supplying advanced weaponry, clashed with Germany's more cautious approach. Macron's call for a united European front was met with skepticism, particularly regarding France's commitment compared to other allies. Germany, led by Chancellor Olaf Scholz, firmly opposed the deployment of ground troops and criticized Macron's emphasis on military solutions. He also opposed the sending of Taurus missiles to Ukraine. The rift highlights broader tensions over the allocation of EU funds and differing perceptions of escalation risks.

Excerpts on the sticking point about Germany sending Taurus missiles to Ukraine - or not

"Mr Macron's emphasis on building a missile coalition was seen as an effort to cajole Germany into sending its Taurus cruise missile to Ukraine. Taurus would not only supplement a dwindling stock of British and French missiles, which have been used to devastating effect, but is also thought to be particularly well suited to destroying the Kerch Strait bridge from the Russian mainland to Crimea.

Mr Scholz has long resisted these calls, fearful that sending Taurus would lead to escalation with Russia. That is not just because of concerns over the sensitivity of Crimea or the fact that the missile could theoretically strike Russian cities. It also reflects a conviction—hotly contested by his many critics—that Germany would need to send troops to monitor how the missiles were used. That is not so much for technical reasons as political ones.

"What is being done in the way of...targeting support on the part of the British and the French can't be done in Germany," said Mr Scholz on February 26th, referring, obliquely, to the widespread belief that British and French special forces in Ukraine exercise oversight by identifying, vetting and programming targets into Anglo-French missiles. Britain and France can deploy such troops with virtually no political or parliamentary oversight. Germany cannot. Merely hinting at this, however, has been seen by some as an outrageous "outing" of what his allies are up to.

Moreover, some Germans worry that if the issue were to become a matter for the constitutional court, it could act to jeopardise support for wider German aid. "German soldiers", insisted Mr Scholz, "must at no point and in no place be linked to targets [Taurus] reaches." In theory, Germany could send the missiles to Britain or France, allowing their personnel to monitor the weapons' use. In practice that would require a level of trust that, on the evidence of this week, is sorely lacking. "

More links on the topic (see as well at "14 Topics", section # 1):

[Taurus wiretapping scandal: what's at stake here? | eurotopics.net](https://eurotopics.net) (free access)

[UK urges Germany to give long-range missiles to Kyiv despite Luftwaffe leak | Ukraine | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com) (free access)

[En Allemagne, le « scandale des écoutes » de la Luftwaffe par la Russie affaiblit Olaf Scholz \(lemonde.fr\)](https://www.lemonde.fr) (pay wall)