

## UK and Germany Seal Strategic Pact Covering Defence, Trade and Migration

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— Categories: Defence & Security



The United Kingdom and Germany have formally signed the Kensington Treaty, marking a major step in bilateral relations by strengthening military cooperation, addressing illegal migration, and expanding economic ties. The accord comes as Europe takes stock of evolving geopolitical threats and seeks greater strategic autonomy.

Signed in London on 17 July 2025 by UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, the treaty reinforces both nations' commitment to shared security, particularly in the face of ongoing Russian aggression and uncertainty over future US engagement in European defence. Chancellor Merz called it “a historic day for German British relations”, underscoring the significance of deeper cooperation in the post-Brexit era.

On defence, the treaty builds on the existing Trinity House Agreement of 2024 and includes provisions for mutual military assistance in the event of armed aggression, in line with NATO commitments. Germany has pledged to increase its defense spending to 2.5 percent of gross domestic product by 2029. This opens the door for further joint UK–German programmes, such as the co-production of Boxer armoured vehicles, Typhoon fighter jets, and next-generation missile systems, developments that are likely to benefit Britain's defence industry.

The agreement also includes new measures to combat illegal migration. Germany will close a legal loophole by criminalising the storage and supply of small boats used for cross-Channel smuggling, complementing the UK's domestic crackdown on illegal crossings. This signals a rare example of meaningful continental cooperation on border enforcement and deterrence, an area where pan-European unity has often faltered.

Economic and mobility benefits are another pillar of the pact. A German defence contractor is expected to open a drone manufacturing facility in Swindon, creating jobs and investment in the UK. British citizens will gain access to fast-track entry via German e-gates from August, while students and school pupils will be able to engage in exchanges without the need for visas, improving academic links between the two nations.

Strategically, the Kensington Treaty reinforces the role of the E3 grouping, Britain, Germany, and France, as a diplomatic and security counterweight within Europe. While the UK remains outside of European Union institutions, this agreement signals a clear intent to shape continental policy through bilateral and multilateral pacts rooted in mutual interest rather than ideology.

This accord reflects pragmatic statecraft. Rather than relying on the uncertain guarantees of global partners, Britain is now investing in stable European relationships, protecting national interests, revitalising defence capabilities, and securing a more robust position in a changing world.