

Baltic Security in the German Press

25 August 2026 — CIA Director Ratcliffe visits Moscow; US media report on 27 August a warning against an attack on NATO states, with particular focus on the Baltic

NEWS HOTSPOT · 25–27 AUGUST 2026

Ratcliffe in Moscow — the Baltic named for the first time as the focus of a US warning

● 25 August 2026: CIA Director John Ratcliffe meets SVR chief Naryshkin in Moscow. On 27 August the Wall Street Journal and Politico report Ratcliffe warned Russia against an attack on NATO allies; according to Politico, primarily over eastern NATO partners in the Baltic. The Kremlin calls the reports "scare stories." Latvia's President Rinkēvičs considers a direct attack unlikely for now, but warns hybrid threats remain possible.

WEEKLY SUMMARY

How the German press covered the Baltic this week

Extract — see the German briefing for the full analysis, quotes, and media-by-media breakdown.

Coverage — Most outlets ran the same wire copy, which names only "the Baltic" as a region; only Bild and a separately-written SZ piece named Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania individually, both citing Politico or the Wall Street Journal. t-online and the Frankfurter Rundschau stood out as the only outlets drawing on Baltic primary sources: t-online evaluated Latvia's SAB intelligence-service annual report, while the Frankfurter Rundschau cited Lithuania's defence minister on the new Rūdninkai training camp. WELT ran two conflicting pieces in the same week — one confirming Russian naval aggression, one questioning the plausibility of a 2029 attack scenario.

Gaps — The Kremlin's claim that European states are the real aggressors went unremarked.

Strongest outlets: t-online and Frankfurter Rundschau, the only ones with independent Baltic sourcing.

SOURCES

→ t-online: "CIA-Chef warnt Moskau vor Angriff – so könnte Putin die Nato testen" (27.8.2026) – https://www.t-online.de/nachrichten/ausland/internationale-politik/id_101407582/cia-sorge-vor-hybriden-angriffen-so-koennte-russland-die-nato-testen.html

→ Frankfurter Rundschau: "Aufstocken an der NATO-Ostflanke: Litauen baut neues Militärlager an Bundeswehr-Standort" (22.8.2026) – <https://www.fr.de/politik/ukraine-krieg-nato-usa-putin-belarus-ostflanke-leopard-kampfpanzer-europaeische-union-zr-94454891.html>

→ WELT: "Marineinspekteur: Russland ,aggressiv auf See'" (27.8.2026) – <https://www.welt.de/regionales/mecklenburg-vorpommern/article6a905fde0c649aabd9716069/marineinspekteur-russland-aggressiv-auf-see.html>

→ WELT: "Szenario 2029: Und jetzt: der Krieg?" (25.8.2026) – <https://www.welt.de/debatte/plus6a8436089fcb5798aae3a675/szenario-2029-und-jetzt-der-krieg.html>

→ DIE ZEIT (Live blog): "Russland droht mit Angriffen auf britische Militärziele" (27.8.2026, 17:19) – <https://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/ukraine-krieg-news-liveblog>

All links last accessed 27 August 2026.