

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## Reducing the burden of military spending in the Middle East

Associate Professor Partha Gangopadhyay from the UWS School of Business has received funding from Synergy IT Solutions to investigate the financial and economic burden of military spending in the Middle East, and develop a plan to significantly reduce it. The aim of the research is to produce a working model of the origins and variables involved in creating these burdens, and create a practical way to minimise them in Middle Eastern countries.

'Many countries around the world invest large amounts of money maintaining oversized military forces, even if they are rarely used', Associate Professor Gangopadhyay explains. 'This is known as a "defence burden." The spending requirements of a defence burden are often justified by claiming that huge militaries serve as a deterrent to other nations' aggression – however, there is little empirical evidence to support this.' Middle Eastern countries currently have high disproportionately high defence burdens for their size, and this may be negatively affecting their development in non-military areas. The creation of a simple economic model of defence burdens is urgently needed as it may help to reduce the social cost of a large military without compromising security.

The research project will be conducted in four stages. Stage 1 will build on existing models of defence spending variables – such as an "organisational politics" model – to construct an analytical model of defence burdens. In Stage 2 information from the Armed Conflict Data database and other secondary sources will be reviewed and used to test the new model. Stage 3 will see the model used to create an "action plan" for countries in the Middle East to reduce their defence burden, and the final stage will outline how this plan will promote greater stability in the region.



If the variables underlying the consistently high defence burden in Middle Eastern countries can be modelled, then a method to safely reduce it may be implemented. Reducing the defence burden in the Middle East will free up resources for sustainable development in the financial and economic sectors, paving the way for more long-term stability in the region.

**Project Title:** Implications of defence burden for the economic and financial sustainability in the Middle East  
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**Contact Details:** [p.gangopadhyay@uws.edu.au](mailto:p.gangopadhyay@uws.edu.au);  
<http://www.uws.edu.au/sob>

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