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OTAN

# Enhancing security and extending stability through NATO enlargement

Seven countries – Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia – formally became NATO members on 29 March 2004 with all the benefits and responsibilities that Alliance membership entails. The enlargement of the Alliance extends the zone of security and stability in Europe and brings some 45 million more European citizens under NATO's protective umbrella.

The fifth round of NATO enlargement – the second since the end of the Cold War – is by far the largest, involving as many countries as in all four previous rounds. In the words of NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: “It will be a major step towards a long-standing NATO objective: a Europe free, united and secure in peace, democracy and common values.” >



The seven new members have undergone comprehensive and demanding reforms

For the seven new members – all of which are former Central and Eastern European Communist countries – NATO accession represents the culmination of a long preparatory process lasting the best part of a decade.

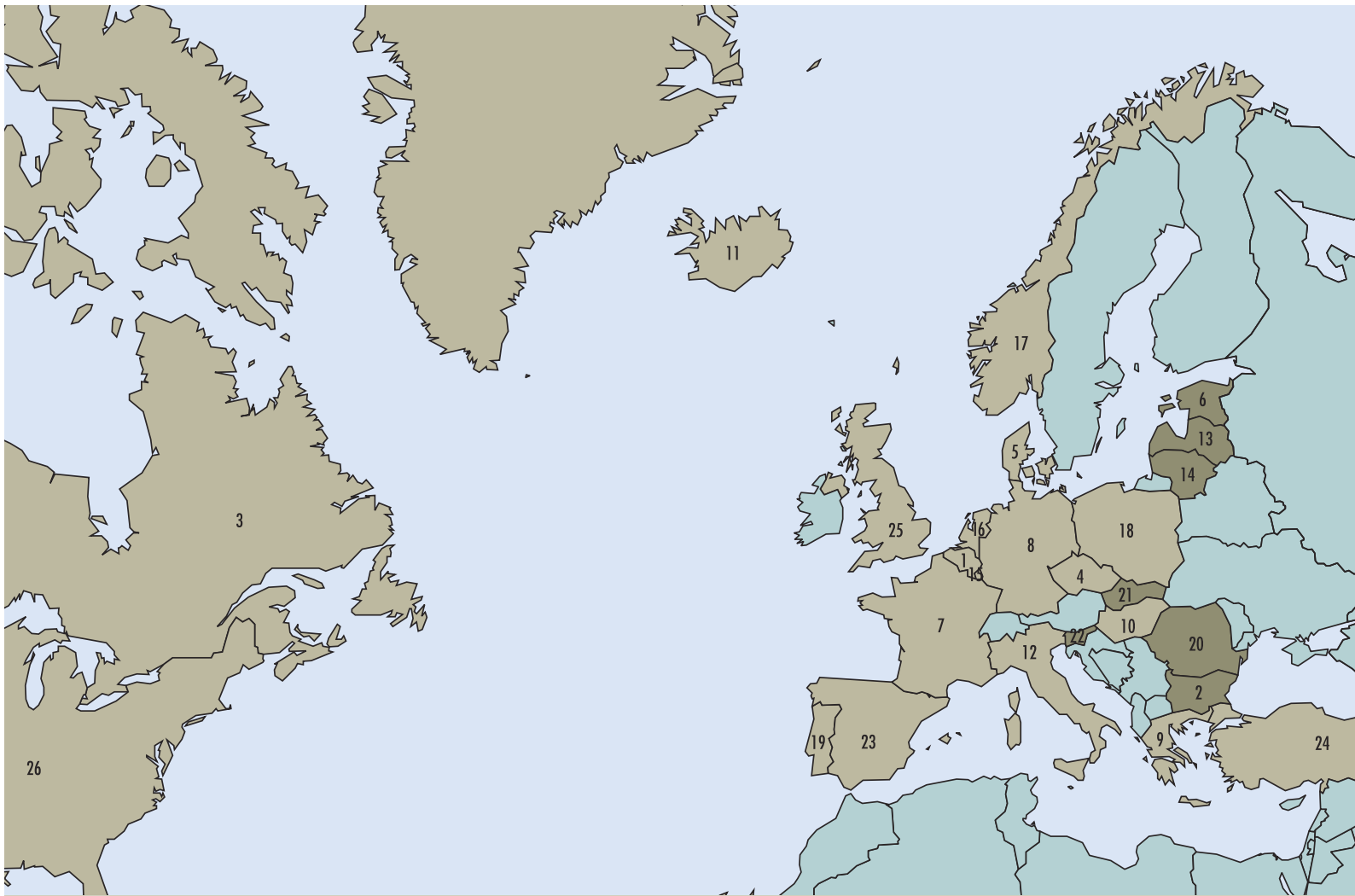
All seven countries joined NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme soon after its creation in 1994 and have subsequently forged ever closer and deeper relations with the Alliance with a view to becoming NATO members. Since 1999, all of these countries have benefited from intensified cooperation under the Membership Action Plan (MAP), a programme of advice, assistance and practical support designed to help the countries wishing to join the Alliance to meet NATO standards (*see box on the Membership Action Plan*).

In the process, the seven new members have undergone comprehensive and demanding reforms



























covering a wide variety of areas extending well beyond defence and security issues and military structures. While undertaking these reforms, these countries have also become involved alongside other NATO Partner countries in many of the Alliance's operations, including NATO-led peacekeeping missions in both the Balkans and in Afghanistan.

Participation in these operations has enabled countries to demonstrate that, in addition to being consumers of security – benefiting in particular from the Alliance's collective-defence guarantee that is enshrined in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty – they are also able to contribute to security and to help increase stability in and beyond the Euro-Atlantic area.

NATO enlargement is by no means a new phenomenon (*see box on the history of enlargement*). In the 55 years since the Alliance was created, its membership has grown from the 12 founders to today's 26 members. Enlargement is in fact an on-going and dynamic process, based upon Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, which states that membership is open to any "European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area".



NATO members  NATO members since 2004

- |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
|  Belgium (1)        |  Germany (8)    |  Luxembourg (15)  |  Slovakia (21)       |
|  Bulgaria (2)       |  Greece (9)     |  Netherlands (16) |  Slovenia (22)       |
|  Canada (3)         |  Hungary (10)   |  Norway (17)      |  Spain (23)          |
|  Czech Republic (4) |  Iceland (11)   |  Poland (18)      |  Turkey (24)         |
|  Denmark (5)        |  Italy (12)     |  Portugal (19)    |  United Kingdom (25) |
|  Estonia (6)        |  Latvia (13)    |  Romania (20)     |  United States (26)  |
|  France (7)         |  Lithuania (14) |  |   |

# Enlargement since the end of the Cold War

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Both the latest round of NATO enlargement and the first post-Cold War accession of new countries in 1999, when the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland joined the Alliance, have helped to strengthen NATO, enhance security and extend stability in Europe. In the early 1990s, however, many political analysts were unsure of the benefits that enlargement would bring to the existing members in terms of Alliance cohesion and solidarity, and were concerned by the possible impact on relations with other states.

In 1995, the Alliance carried out and published the results of a Study on NATO Enlargement (see *box*) that considered the merits of admitting new members and how they should be brought in. It concluded that the end of the Cold War provided a unique opportunity to build improved security in the entire Euro-Atlantic area and that NATO enlargement would contribute to enhanced stability and security for all.

According to the Study, countries seeking NATO membership had to be able to demonstrate that they had fulfilled certain requirements. These included providing evidence that they each represented a functioning democratic, political system based on a market economy; that they treated minority populations in accordance with OSCE guidelines;

had resolved outstanding disputes with neighbours and had made an overall commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes; had the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance and to achieve interoperability with other members' forces; and were committed to democratic civil-military relations and institutional structures.

Once admitted, new members would enjoy all the rights and assume all the obligations of membership at the time they joined. These include acceptance of all the principles, policies and procedures previously adopted by the other Alliance members.

At the Alliance's Prague Summit in November 2002, the seven newest NATO members were invited to begin accession talks. The talks took place at NATO headquarters in Brussels and brought together teams of NATO experts and representatives of the individual invitees. An integral part of the talks involved the formal confirmation by the invitees of their interest, willingness and ability to meet the political, legal and military obligations and commitments of NATO membership, as laid out in the Washington Treaty and in the Study on NATO Enlargement.

The talks took place in two sessions with each invitee. In the first session,

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# Accession timetable

political and defence or military issues were discussed, essentially providing the opportunity to establish that the preconditions for membership had been met. The second session was more technical and included discussion of resources, security, and legal issues as well as the contribution of each new member country to NATO's common budget. This was determined on a proportional basis, according to the size of their economies in relation to those of other Alliance member countries.

Invitees were also required to sign and ratify relevant legal documents, implement measures to ensure the protection of NATO classified information, and prepare their security and intelligence services to work with the NATO Office of Security. In the legal context, candidate member countries also needed to become signatories to a series of agreements relating to the status of forces as well as technical matters and information matters. These included the Washington Treaty, the 1951 London Agreement on status of forces, and the 1952 Paris Protocol on the status of international military headquarters. "Status of forces" covers the terms under which the forces of other Allies may operate in a NATO country, for example in relation to exercises or operational military deployments.



NATO is created with 12 founding members: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States.

1949 ^

The accession talks also resulted in a timetable submitted by each invitee for the completion of the necessary reforms, some of which are longer-term and are still being implemented after the date of accession. The timetable was based on several issues, including existing MAP objectives, "Partnership Goals" (equivalent to the "force goals" used within NATO to draw up at regular intervals each member country's military contribution to the Alliance), and each country's Annual National Programme (prepared by every MAP country for examination and approval by NATO).

In the second step of the accession process, each invitee country provided confirmation of its acceptance of the obligations and commitments of membership, including a timetable for completing reforms, in the form of a letter of intent from each foreign minister addressed to the NATO Secretary General.

The third step was for NATO to prepare Accession Protocols to the Washington Treaty for each invitee. These protocols are in effect amendments or additions to the Treaty and henceforth become an integral part of the Treaty itself. They were signed by NATO ambassadors on 26 March

2003, formally paving the way for the invitees to become parties to the Treaty and enabling representatives of the invitees from that point on to attend North Atlantic Council meetings and most NATO committee meetings as observers.

The fourth step was for the governments of NATO member states to ratify the protocols, according to their national requirements and procedures. The ratification procedure varies from country to country. For example, the United States requires a majority of two-thirds to pass the required legislation in the Senate. Elsewhere, for example in the United Kingdom, no formal parliamentary vote is required. With the ratification of the protocols by the French Senate on 5 February 2004, all NATO member states had completed the process.

This opened the way for the fifth and final step of the accession process, namely accession to the protocols by each invited country in line with its own national procedures, followed by the deposit of the "instruments of accession" with the US State Department, the depository of the Washington Treaty, at a ceremony at the White House in Washington DC on 29 March 2004. It was on this

occasion that the seven countries formally became members of the Alliance.

The fifth round of NATO enlargement will not be the last. The Alliance's door remains open to further new members. At present, Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* are participating in the MAP.

Since the Prague Summit, NATO has increased its assistance to Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* in the area of defence and security sector reform, in order to help both countries prepare for future Alliance membership. Croatia, which joined the MAP in 2002, will also be considered for NATO membership, subject to the successful implementation of its reform programme and its compliance with international obligations, including cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

In accordance with the Washington Treaty and subject to the agreement of all Alliance member states, NATO membership is also open to any other European country wishing to join.

*For more information on NATO enlargement and profiles of the Alliance's newest members, see [www.nato.int/issues/enlargement/index.htm](http://www.nato.int/issues/enlargement/index.htm)*

### Accession of Greece and Turkey

1952 ^

### Accession of the Federal Republic of Germany

1955 ^

### Accession of Spain

1982 ^

# Membership Action Plan

The Membership Action Plan (MAP) is a NATO programme of advice, assistance and practical support tailored to the individual needs of countries wishing to join the Alliance. It was launched in April 1999 at the Alliance's Washington Summit to help countries aspiring to NATO membership in their preparations. The process drew heavily on the experience gained during the accession process of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, which had joined NATO in the Alliance's first post-Cold War round of enlargement in 1999.

The MAP's main features are the submission by aspiring members of individual annual national programmes on their preparations for possible future membership, covering political, economic, defence, resource, security and legal aspects; a focused and candid feedback mechanism on aspirant countries' progress on their programmes that includes both political and technical advice, as well as annual meetings between all NATO members and individual aspirants at the level of the North Atlantic Council to assess progress; and a defence planning approach for aspirants which includes elaboration and review of agreed planning targets.

Though MAP participation helps prepare aspirants for Alliance membership, it does not provide a guarantee of future membership. However, the seven countries that joined NATO on 29 March 2004 all benefited from the MAP as do today's aspirants, Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\*



As a result of German unification, the territory of the former German Democratic Republic becomes part of the Alliance.

Accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland

Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia

1990 ^

1999 ^

2004 ^



# Study on NATO Enlargement

In 1995, the Alliance undertook a study to examine the “why and how” of future admissions into the Alliance. The Study on NATO Enlargement concluded that, with the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, there was both a need for and a unique opportunity to build improved security in the entire Euro-Atlantic area without recreating dividing lines.

The Study further concluded that enlargement would contribute to enhanced stability and security for all countries in the Euro-Atlantic area by encouraging and supporting democratic reforms, including the establishment of civilian and democratic control over military forces; fostering patterns and habits of cooperation, consultation and consensus-building characteristic of relations among members of the Alliance; and promoting good-neighbourly relations. It would increase transparency in defence planning and military budgets, thereby reinforcing confidence among states, and would reinforce the overall tendency toward closer integration and cooperation in Europe. The Study also concluded that enlargement would strengthen the Alliance’s ability to contribute to European and international security and strengthen and broaden the transatlantic partnership.

Regarding the “how” of enlargement, the Study confirmed that, as in the past, any future extension of the Alliance’s membership would be through accession of new member states to the Washington Treaty in accordance with Article 10. Once admitted, new members would enjoy all the rights and assume all the obligations of membership. At the time that they joined they would need to accept and conform to the principles, policies and procedures already adopted by all members of the Alliance.

Other conditions were also stipulated, including the need for candidate countries to settle ethnic disputes or external territorial disputes by peaceful means before they could become members. The ability of interested countries to contribute militarily to collective defence, peacekeeping and other new missions of the Alliance would be a factor in deciding whether to invite them to join the Alliance. Ultimately, the Study concluded, Allies would decide by consensus whether to invite each new member to join, basing their decision on their judgement of whether the membership of a specific country would contribute to security and stability in the North Atlantic area.

## A history of NATO enlargement

Since NATO’s creation in 1949, the Alliance has taken in new members on five separate occasions in 1952, 1955, 1982, 1999 and 2004. In this way, the 12 founding members – Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States – have grown to 26.

The first round of enlargement took place in 1952 and brought in Greece and Turkey, thereby extending security and stability to Southeastern Europe. Three years later, in 1955, the Federal Republic of Germany became NATO’s 15<sup>th</sup> member. And Spain became the Alliance’s 16<sup>th</sup> member when it joined in 1982. In the wake of German reunification in 1990, the whole of Germany, including the territory of the former German Democratic Republic, came under NATO’s protective umbrella.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact after the end of the Cold War opened up the possibility of further NATO enlargement. The new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe were eager to join the Alliance to become integrated into Euro-Atlantic institutions and cement their freedom.

The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were invited to begin accession talks at the Alliance’s Madrid Summit in 1997 and on 12 March 1999 they became the first former members of the Warsaw Pact to join NATO. Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia, all formerly part of the Warsaw Pact, and Slovenia were invited to begin accession talks at the Alliance’s Prague Summit in 2002.

\* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.