Sustaining the Transatlantic Alliance

75 Years of RAND Insights on NATO—Annex with Annotated Bibliography
About This Annex

Since the beginnings of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), RAND has contributed extensive research and recommendations that informed historic decisions guiding the Alliance’s adaptation and transformation. In the main report to this annex, available at www.rand.org/t/RRA3235-1, we provide a historical analysis and overview of RAND’s most seminal work on NATO, covering the key evolutions of the Alliance’s political and military dimensions from the Cold War, to its expansion and shift to cooperative security and out-of-area operations, and to the return to a focus on territorial defense of the Euro-Atlantic area in the face of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. The main report highlights RAND’s contributions to addressing some of the most critical questions that NATO has faced over the course of its existence, as well as specific research findings, insights, and recommendations that either remain relevant today or have become relevant again, given the new challenges that the Alliance faces. This annotated bibliography presents notable, publicly available reports over seven decades that were supported by a wide range of sponsors.

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RAND National Security Research Division

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For more information on the RAND International Security and Defense Policy Program, see www.rand.org/nsrd/isdp or contact the director (contact information is provided on the webpage).
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Annotated Bibliography

Deterrence and Defense

Ansoff, H. Igor, and R. N. Snow, *Comments on a SHAPE Requirements Study*, RAND Corporation, D-1768, 1953. As of June 18, 2024:

RAND researchers spent a week at SHAPE Headquarters in Europe while the Plans Branch of the Plans, Policy, and Operations Division, SHAPE Headquarters, was engaged in a 1956 requirements study. RAND researchers assisted participating officers in defining what a requirements study entailed and how it should be carried out. After reviewing the study’s formulation and progression at a given point, the researchers decided to suggest a formulation that would be consistent and applicable to the problem at hand. This paper is reproduced from a memorandum that the authors prepared for Colonel R. Worden, a member of the Plans, Policy, and Operations Division, SHAPE Headquarters.


This document presents a preliminary outline and summary of the information required to conduct a war game insofar as that may be foreseen. It also considers methodology briefly. Most of the items apply to both NATO and Soviet Union forces under proper interpretation, and the information should be collected with this full symmetry in view. With some changes in emphasis, the outline represents any year from about the year of publication to 1960, but the particular year to which a war game relates must be specified exactly.

Hoag, Malcolm W., *NATO Deterrent vs. Shield*, RAND Corporation, RM-1926, 1957. As of May 23, 2024:
https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_memoranda/RM1926.html

A discussion of the argument within NATO for supplementing strategic air forces with strong tactical forces for total war. The disadvantages are that tactical forces do not contribute greatly toward deterring or fighting total war, their cost imposes military sacrifices elsewhere, better air defenses may be more effective, and our European allies may have little incentive to supply tactical forces. However, in the case of a sharply limited war in Europe, tactical forces have
renewed utility, with strategic air forces complementing tactical forces as the necessary enforcer of weapon limitations.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_memoranda/RM1837.html

Part of a broader investigation concerned with the politics of German rearmament, the present memorandum discusses atomic blackmail as it applies to West Germany. While the Soviets can exploit the threat-value of their atomic weapons against European members of NATO, a new balance of atomic power will be achieved when individual NATO members acquire their own effective atomic capability. The furtherance of Soviet policy by this type of threat is shown in connection with the recent Middle East crisis.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P4783.html

Discussion of the thesis that the NATO force, particularly its U.S. component, is inappropriately structured and unnecessarily expensive. Though NATO’s declaratory objectives stress defense and deterrence, its force structure is attuned to offense and protracted war. Remedies include (1) concentrating conventional defense preparations in the critical center region, (2) accepting the greater likelihood of a short war as a basic operating assumption, (3) restructuring the force to emphasize defense (more antitank weapons, prepositioned supplies) and short-term war-fighting capability (more use of local logistical resources), and (4) changing the current practice of replacing wartime losses with individuals to a policy of unit replacement. Besides making the force more appropriate to its mission, the proposed measures would substantially reduce costs.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R1088.html

A reappraisal of U.S. military posture in Europe to uncover options that policymakers may have neglected in the choice of alternative force structures and operating practices. While accepting the widely held premise of NATO’s conventional inferiority to Warsaw Pact forces, the author examines the origin of the premise in an effort to escape the dilemmas that have long confronted U.S. and European decisionmakers. A net military assessment reveals that NATO’s deficiencies are a self-imposed assortment of inertia and misunderstanding. For example, NATO has not developed operating procedures and a force structure appropriate to its strategic requirements in European context, as has done the Pact. It currently sustains expensive but weak conventional
forces with an emphasis on nuclear weapons. What is needed is a basic rethinking of NATO’s military structure. Thereupon, it can readily attain conventional comparability or parity with the Pact and at no increase in military budget or manpower.

Komer, Robert W., Treating NATO’s Self-Inflicted Wound, RAND Corporation, P-5092, 1973. As of April 6, 2024:
https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P5092.html

The advent of nuclear parity makes conventional deterrence and defense much more important than before. Yet inflated manpower and weapon costs risk pricing them out of the market. When America’s allies, and increasingly the United States itself, shrink from fielding a credible conventional defense, they are victims of a pervasive myth that effective nonnuclear defense against a Warsaw Pact attack is impossible, at least without massive military outlays. But the myth of inevitable Pact superiority is largely a self-inflicted wound. NATO’s inferiority springs from its own failure to optimize its defense posture. The solution presented is to restructure NATO’s existing force posture, freeing up needed resources by cutting back on marginal activities, emphasizing tradeoffs rather than add-ons, and reallocating existing budgets rather than buying more forces.

Mendershausen, Horst, Territorial Defense in NATO and Non-NATO Europe, RAND Corporation, R-1184-ISA, 1973. As of June 6, 2024:
https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R1184.html

Pressures working on defense structures of European NATO countries, particularly those of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), tend to favor a change to latent conscript forces oriented toward territorial defense on one hand, standing volunteer armies on the other. Political, financial, and military potentialities of a combination of such forces are discussed, and a detailed comparison made of territorial defense concepts and forces, as well as civil defense preparations, in four countries—Switzerland and Yugoslavia (which do not participate in NATO’s military integration) and Norway and France (which do so to a much lesser extent than the FRG). As long as the Germans and others in NATO believe that a shift toward latent forces endangers the alliance, and as long as U.S. attitudes confirm this belief, the potentialities of such forces will not be fully realized. The study draws on interviews the author conducted with military and civil defense specialists in West Germany, Norway, Sweden, and France.

Discusses questions raised by the new wide availability of precision-guided munitions (PGMs). The paper discusses implications of these weapons on large-scale nonnuclear war, use by smaller countries, trends in arms transfer, and ideas for arms control. Strategies must be developed which cut risks by seeking carefully delimited goals. PGM technology facilitates these strategies by permitting military power to be applied precisely. Speculations on defense industry trends are discussed. The conclusions are (1) nonnuclear PGMs make smaller states and NATO more defensible, thus short-run stability is increased; (2) the pace of war will be faster; (3) there is hope that the trend in the 20th century toward including civilian populations as targets can be reversed; (4) this is a good time to revise vague theater nuclear policies; (5) PGMs will play an important part in making or countering a threat to use limited nuclear force; and (6) arms buildup in the Middle East implies problems for world stability.


Assesses possibilities for large-scale rationalization of NATO’s defense posture as the only viable answer to the defense resource bind created by the rising cost of modern forces in a period of severely constrained defense budgets and manpower. Recommends strict priorities and a NATO-monitored matrix approach. Advances numerous specific options, especially in the following key areas: (1) initial ground/air defense against a WP blitzkrieg must get top priority; (2) how to cut marginal national forces and overhead to free resources for trade-off; (3) how to streamline NATO ground, air, and naval forces to reduce manpower costs and free funds for greater readiness and modern equipment; (4) how to place new emphasis on well-trained and quickly mobilizable reserve forces; (5) how to get more flexible use of air power; and (6) how to get more interoperability and compatibility of forces.


A critique of U.S. military failure to take adequate account in our force posture of the special requirements of coalition war. Despite the fact that we have fought as part of a coalition in every one of our major 20th-century conflicts, we have consistently neglected explicit peacetime preparation, and have instead relied on ad hoc wartime responses. There is no longer time for
this, especially since the NATO scenario—the sizing case for our GPF forces—requires winning the first anti-blitzkrieg battle.


Elaboration of the author’s contention that current disputes about the rationale for deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in NATO Europe can only be understood in historical terms. The paper surveys NATO doctrine from 1950 to the present, the roles of airpower and the land battle, forward basing and European politics, the worth of strategic superiority, and Russian responses. As lessons from history, the author concludes that legitimate European fears and concerns do not drive us to accept a SALT agreement that cannot stand on its own merits. Shared concerns of the United States and Europe must be taken into account; we must proceed with our allies to negotiate a better SALT III. Never again should the United States make the mistakes that resulted in poor SALT I and II agreements.


Analyzes the political and military background of the decision by the NATO Foreign and Defense Ministers, in December 1979, to modernize NATO’s long-range theater nuclear forces (LRTNF), in response to the Soviet threat. The Soviets have greatly enhanced their capabilities with such new systems as the Backfire, Fencer, and Flogger D aircraft, but most of all with the mobile, MIRVed SS-20 missile. The authors concur that LRTNF modernization is warranted, but warn that it alone will not solve other crucial problems, both military and political, the latter including strains on the cohesion of West European NATO members. The authors stress the need for improvements in NATO’s conventional forces, while focusing primarily on the critical importance of restoring West European confidence in U.S. strategic forces.


The author addresses two questions: (1) What is it that we want and can reasonably expect NATO’s theater nuclear forces (TNF) to do in the decade ahead? (2) If NATO could start from scratch, what would a sensible nuclear force posture look like? His analysis uses four simple ideas to discriminate between key issues: distinguishing between NATO and its members; distinguishing between nations; distinguishing between national interests; and distinguishing
between nuclear forces. These ideas are used to discuss implications for the states (the frontier states, the interior states, and the overseas states), implications for the policies, and implications for forces (battlefield forces, theater nuclear forces, and strategic forces).


As part of a larger study, a survey was conducted of articles and papers that have proposed new or different concepts for the defense of NATO. Each article was read for the author’s view on three topics: why a change is needed in NATO’s current defense concepts or capabilities; what the main tenets of the author’s proposed concepts are; and how the concept is supposed to work. This Note presents a synopsis of the unclassified articles, selected to reflect many different views. It also categorizes the views in several ways. No attempt is made, however, to evaluate the individual proposals or to incorporate any information on possible Soviet/Warsaw Pact reactions to the proposals. The main purpose of the Note is to provide planners and analysts with an overview of the variety and scope of suggested changes in NATO defense concepts and capabilities.


NATO’s defense planners face critical issues about the future of NATO’s nuclear deterrent, but the intense political controversy over the impending deployment of new Long-Range Theater Nuclear Forces in Europe has submerged these issues. This paper looks at some of the issues planners face when confronting the problem of NATO’s nuclear deterrent. Those issues include the flexible response debate; NATO’s continued adherence to flexible response; accounting for changes; the military balance; criteria for planning NATO’s response; force structure issues; how to direct the force; and the size of the nuclear stockpile.


After more than a decade of comparatively little public interest in matters of nuclear strategy, the last few years have seen a resurgence of concern about the policy of nuclear deterrence that the North Atlantic Alliance has followed since the early 1950s. In Europe in particular, this concern has centered on the role of theater nuclear weapons in NATO strategy. This report briefly examines the way in which that strategy evolved from the foundation of the Alliance in 1949 to
the formal adoption of the current “flexible response” strategy in 1967, with particular reference to the role of theater nuclear weapons. It then traces the development within the NATO Nuclear Planning Group of the more detailed doctrine concerning the role of theater nuclear weapons within the overall strategy, which led inter alia to the decision taken by NATO in 1979 to modernize the long-term component of the theater nuclear forces. The report examines the main arguments that have been advanced against the current flexible response strategy, and considers the merits of various alternative strategies. The report finally considers ways in which the Alliance’s theater nuclear stockpile might be adapted to meet the political and strategic needs of the 1980s.


This paper considers three different concepts for the conventional defense of the NATO Central Region as a way of providing a perspective on the analysis of alternative defense concepts for NATO. The three defense concepts are fortified barrier, forward response, and distributed area defense. The author analyzed each of these concepts using a computer model called MASTER (Mass and Space/Time Evaluation Routine). His analysis identified military, political, and cost factors affecting the implementation and effectiveness of each of the three defense concepts.


Concern has grown in recent years about Europe’s dependence on nuclear weapons for its security. The credibility of the current NATO strategy of flexible response is being questioned. It is widely felt that NATO should strengthen its conventional force capability in order to raise the nuclear threshold. New developments in technology appear to offer hope that a main obstacle to an effective conventional defense against conventional attack, its cost, can at last be overcome. This report gives a wide overview of the implications of these developments. Concentrating on central Europe, it examines the question whether the continued maintenance of an effective strategy of deterrence requires a change in the relationship between the conventional and nuclear elements of it. It considers the adoption of a no-first-use policy buttressed by conventional force improvements large enough to create a permanent conventional force balance in Europe. The report concludes that improving conventional forces to the point of equivalence with the Warsaw Pact would risk decoupling the defense of Europe against conventional attack from the United States’ nuclear umbrella and would thus reduce deterrence, as well as damage the cohesion of the Alliance.

This Note analyzes Soviet reactions to and concern over NATO’s use of deep-look reconnaissance sensors, automated command and control, and highly accurate conventional munitions made possible by “emerging technologies” (ET). It briefly describes the emerging technologies and their application to deep attack concepts, and it examines Soviet commentary on the systems and employment concepts being discussed in the West, Soviet views of the utility of such systems, and their impact on Soviet forces and tactics. It considers Soviet response options in the near and medium terms, and their implications for the West. Among its conclusions are the following: (1) the Soviets are more concerned with the long-range implications of ET rather than with any particular weapon; (2) the West should take care not to squander its lead in this area of weapons development; (3) any reconnaissance, command-control-communication, or attack systems the West develops must be resistant to Soviet countermeasures; and (4) because of the implications for future arms negotiations, future ET weapons should be distinguished from their nuclear counterparts, in terms of both their physical appearance and flight profiles.


The development of new strategic nuclear weapons systems and the current chill in Soviet-American relations have clouded the future of strategic arms control. Prospective deployments of certain strategic weapons also strain relations between the United States and its NATO allies. This paper examines what systems are likely to be deployed during the 1980s, maps certain options for strategic arms control in light of these deployments, and explores their effect on the NATO alliance. The author concludes that reaching an arms control agreement will be difficult in view of the steady decline in the state of Soviet-American relations since the late 1970s and the larger number of systems now deployed in Europe. The greatest obstacle to an agreement is the apparent incompatibility of the goals pursued by each side: The Soviet Union is primarily concerned with stopping or restricting the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative, while the United States seeks deep cuts in Soviet offensive forces.
In order to deal with NATO’s principal strategic problem—the declining credibility of nuclear escalation threats to deter Warsaw Pact conventional aggression—this paper reviews NATO’s present strategy; examines broad strategic alternatives, all of which appear to be ruled out or severely limited by current constraints; and concludes that NATO’s recourse is to seek modest improvements in conventional capabilities. The author argues for three changes to improve conventional defenses: (1) changing the NATO defense planning process; (2) correcting deficiencies in the weapons acquisition process; and (3) setting two priority programs—one to preserve the survivability of NATO air operations, and the other to increase NATO’s operational reserves.

Since the early 1970s, various initiatives have been made to improve the NATO defense planning process. This report examines some of these efforts. The purpose is to identify some broad guidelines for introducing and managing future initiatives. The report identifies the most important lessons learned from past initiatives and applies them to current defense improvement programs.

This paper reviews the status of U.S. conventional forces committed to NATO. It highlights recent developments in the Soviet threat; examines the main trends in general purpose force deployment and combat capability; considers the intra-alliance political backdrop against which these trends must be evaluated; and indicates some of the key questions for future debate. The author suggests that unless NATO is content to retain a strategy that would assure either nuclear war or military defeat if deterrence fails, it will have to link its emerging conventional capabilities to an explicitly counteroffensive doctrine so as to raise the nuclear threshold to a more tolerable level without making a conventional war more likely in the process.
https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P7382.html

This paper was originally presented as an address to the North Atlantic Assembly in Plenary Session, The Storting, Oslo, Norway, on September 25, 1987. It considers recent developments in arms control negotiations and their possible effect on the military dimension of Western security policy. The author suggests that because current arms control concerns are working at cross purposes to NATO security policy, an effort should be made to (1) link NATO’s conventional arms control position to its defense program and (2) develop realistic expectations about what conventional arms control can accomplish.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P7277.html

The year 1986 was a very active and potentially significant one for arms control. Stockholm agreements were a limited but useful step toward regulating Warsaw Pact and NATO forces. The United States and the Soviet Union met at Reykjavik and worked out the basic elements of a series of potential agreements that had eluded them for many years. But the near-term prospects for concluding these agreements were not bright. Hard bargaining would be required to resolve important details not worked out at Reykjavik. The introduction of different U.S. and Soviet proposals for a second phase of strategic offensive weapon reductions sparked fruitless recriminations and produced a new area of disagreement. A large gap, probably not unbridgeable, remained on an agreement governing the development and testing of strategic ballistic missile defenses.

Kanter, Arnold, *Nuclear Modernization and Arms Control in NATO*, RAND Corporation, N-2896-FF, 1988. As of May 23, 2024:
https://www.rand.org/pubs/notes/N2896.html

The Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) Treaty and its aftermath have not simply returned NATO to a world without ground-launched cruise missiles, the Pershing II, and the SS-20, but have crystallized and reinforced long-standing questions about the credibility of NATO’s strategy of flexible response, the appropriate role of theater nuclear weapons in the future, and the prospects for continued U.S. leadership of the Alliance. These issues come together in a consideration of whether and how NATO should modernize its remaining nuclear forces. This Note analyzes different ways in which NATO can respond to the nuclear requirements that flow from its strategy. It considers how INF Treaty constraints and prospective Strategic Arms Reduction Talks limits, as well as the special place and concerns of the Federal Republic of Germany, bear
on the various possibilities. It also assesses the implications of different choices for Alliance cohesion, U.S. leadership of NATO, and extended deterrence. On the basis of that analysis, it describes an approach to NATO nuclear modernization and arms control.


The view that NATO conventional military forces are inferior to Warsaw Pact forces is one of the most important factors shaping postwar history. This Note describes the essential features of the balance of conventional forces in Central Europe and presents the author’s view of the consequences of an analysis of these features. The author concentrates on the probable outcome of a potential battle for the Federal Republic of Germany. He concludes that the imbalance of forces in Central Europe currently favors the Warsaw Pact. However, NATO has more leverage to improve its situation through its own unilateral actions than through arms control.


This paper is an attempt to pull together several strands of recent and current RAND research on European security issues and specifically focus on those of importance for the upcoming NATO and U.S.-Soviet summits. The unifying issue in this paper is: How should Europe be defended after the Soviets withdraw from Eastern Europe? It is being distributed to a small number of audiences outside the Corporation both to share our insights and to invite critical review.


Events after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War have shown the need for a transformed NATO capable of a wide range of missions, including projecting stability around the periphery of the NATO treaty area, intervening in civil conflicts, coordinating power-projection operations, and countering weapons of mass destruction. The author’s analysis finds that the military forces of NATO’s member states should be ready for expeditionary operations, which will require expanding and modernizing forces; NATO must be able to deter and defeat chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons; and U.S. forces in Europe are invaluable assets for
shaping behaviors and expectations in the region and for responding to challenges in and around Europe. The future will demand effective and coordinated action by nations with common interests, and for the United States and its allies, NATO is by far the best vehicle available. A key factor will be the Europeans’ willingness to accept greater responsibility for the defense of common interests outside of the treaty area, perhaps beyond Europe itself. Investment in military capabilities as needed is called for.


Senior RAND researchers Michael Johnson, David Ochmanek, and David Shlapak discuss a series of wargames that examined the probable outcome of a Russian invasion of the Baltic states. Wargames conducted in 2014 and 2015 showed that a near-term Russian invasion could reach the Estonian and Latvian capitals or Tallinn and Riga in less than 60 hours. The research underlying this video presentation is described fully in the RAND report, RR-1253-A, *Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO’s Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics*. That report proposes that a multi-brigade NATO armored force—aquadately supported by airpower, land-based fires, and other enablers on the ground and ready to fight at the onset of hostilities—could prevent the rapid overrun of the Baltic states, fundamentally changing the strategic picture as seen from Moscow.


NATO is in the process of implementing posture enhancements to increase capabilities on its eastern flank, and the escalation in tensions between Russia and NATO since 2014 has led analysts to propose measures that are even more extensive. However, Russia’s likely reactions to such posture enhancements remain understudied. In this report, we develop a framework that analysts can use to assess likely Russian reactions to ongoing and proposed NATO posture enhancements in Europe. We develop this framework by assessing Russian strategic writing, the broader international relations literature, and the history of post–Cold War interactions between Russia and NATO. Our analysis suggests that Russian reactions will depend on 11 key factors that capture the strategic context, the Russian domestic context, and the characteristics of the proposed posture enhancements. We then illustrate how this framework can be applied in practice by assessing Russia’s potential reactions to both planned and proposed enhancements. These assessments highlight the importance of clear analysis of Russian perceptions of NATO’s
intentions and commitment, domestic threats to the Russian regime, and the cost sensitivity of the Russian leadership.


In mid-2022, after the opening months of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a group of RAND Corporation researchers conducted an internal series of discussions to examine the recent events of the Russia-Ukraine War. All the participants had been involved in the design and execution of tabletop exercise (TTX) wargames involving Russia during the past eight years, mostly centered on the challenges facing a NATO defense of the Baltic states. The focus of their deliberations was understanding the reasons for the similarities and differences between how Russian forces had fared in those games and the relatively poor real-world performance of the Russian armed forces in Ukraine. This report summarizes the unclassified conclusions of the discussions that followed a comprehensive review of wargaming methods and analysis used. The authors also identify implications for future wargaming and analysis of potential conflicts involving major power adversaries. This is not an in-depth research report about Russian military capabilities or the war in Ukraine but rather the proceedings of an internal set of discussions from experienced wargamers reflecting on recent events.


The U.S. defense strategy and posture have become insolvent. The tasks that the nation expects its military forces and other elements of national power to do internationally exceed the means that are available to accomplish those tasks. Sustained, coordinated efforts by the United States and its allies are necessary to deter and defeat modern threats, including Russia’s ongoing war in Ukraine and reconstituted forces and China’s economic takeoff and concomitant military modernization. This report offers ideas on how to address shortcomings in defense preparations.
Transatlantic Bargain and Burden-Sharing

Marshall, Andrew W., *Determinants of NATO Force Posture*, RAND Corporation, P-3280, 1966. As of April 6, 2024:
https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P3280.html

A discussion of the political and economic factors that continue to keep Western Europe militarily weak despite the spending of almost twenty billion a year on defense. The author sees the major determining factors in the diversion of resources to national rather than alliance use, in diseconomies of scale, in the high production cost of weapons, and in underinvestment in new equipment.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P5033.html

Discusses the recent assertiveness of U.S. dealings with European allies. Alliance relationships survived extremely assertive behavior by de Gaulle in the 1960s. NATO’s customary relationships date from a time when the United States was commonly acknowledged to be in a distinctly advantageous position in both economic and military matters. For 20 years, the European objective has been to keep U.S. troops in Europe, and the U.S. objective has been to share this burden. The allies still spend about the same percentage of GNP for defense and commit about the same forces to NATO emergency plans. Militarily, NATO has been in important ways symbolic rather than realistic. Washington’s tough handling of the 1971 monetary crisis, forcing the others to recognize their interest in the U.S. balance of payments, was a marked departure from the friendly U.S. negotiating style. Similarly, the “Atlantic Charter” proposal of April 1973 links the hitherto separated areas of trade and security. It is unclear, however, whether the administration has the capacity to effect change in the Alliance.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R2836.html

This report documents the proceedings of a Ford Foundation–sponsored workshop on NATO held in RAND’s Washington office, June 10–11, 1981. The workshop brought together a small cross-section of the official and nonofficial strategic community on the two sides of the Atlantic for a candid exchange of views on the problems likely to face the alliance during the coming four years. Although the participants reflected a wide range of views, with divergences within and among individual nationalities, they agreed more than they disagreed. With but a few exceptions, Europeans and Americans alike advocated incremental policies to deal with the alliance’s
continuing basic problems of security, deterrence, and detente. Although the outcome may have been foreordained by the composition of the group, no one saw the need for or advocated a drastic change in the fundamentals of postwar Western security arrangements.


The allocation of burdens and responsibilities within NATO has been a contentious issue since the formation of the alliance. This report explores the reasons that European defense spending is proportionately less than that of the United States, and contrasts the European spending record with their more impressive record in supplying defense resources to the Atlantic Alliance. The analysis makes clear that there are no simple quantitative criteria for assessing burden-sharing performance. Changing perceptions of the Soviet threat, and the forthcoming 1992 change in the European Economic Community, complicate the burden-sharing issue. Burden-sharing must be addressed together with needed changes in NATO military strategy and doctrine, and in light of the new political challenge for NATO governments posed by the Soviet Union’s new style of security diplomacy. A clearer consensus within NATO on a future force structure and military doctrine is essential for acceptable future burden-sharing arrangements.


This Note discusses alliance burden-sharing in the context of multinational provision of a group of goods, including three the author uses to illustrate his discussion—military services, security and economic assistance, and defense and science/technology research. The author formulates a simple and straightforward methodology with which the distribution of alliance burdens can be estimated, given that members of the alliance, both individually and collectively, produce several goods furthering their broad objectives. These goods vary in terms of publicness and exclusion cost. The author includes a brief conceptual discussion of differences in marginal valuations, outlines the numerous components of the three prototypical alliance outputs, and evaluates subjectively the degrees of publicness characterizing the components.

In the coming decade, NATO faces growing fiscal austerity and declining defense budgets. This study analyzes the impact of planned defense budget cuts on the capabilities of seven European members of NATO—the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, and Poland—that together represent more than 80 percent of NATO Europe’s defense spending. The result of the anticipated cuts and future financial constraints is that the capacity of the major European powers to project military power will be highly constrained: The air, land, and sea forces of key U.S. European allies are rapidly reaching the point at which they can perform only one moderate-sized operation at a time and will be hard-pressed to meet the rotation requirements of a protracted, small-scale irregular warfare mission. Power projection and sustainment of significant forces outside Europe’s immediate neighborhood will be particularly difficult. The authors discuss these challenges in a strategic context, including the operational and planning weaknesses exposed by NATO’s intervention in Libya in 2011, and make recommendations for U.S. policy with regard to NATO.


Airpower is critical to improving NATO’s defense and deterrence posture in response to Russia’s aggressive actions and continued military modernization, as recognized in NATO’s 2018 Joint Air Power Strategy. The capabilities of European air forces to defend allies in conflict are evolving, and the trend line in platform modernization is leading in the right direction, most critically with the introduction of fifth-generation aircraft. European allies are also beginning to invest more in personnel, training, and equipment availability. Taken together, these developments could decrease Russia’s ability to achieve its operational and political-military objectives in a theater-wide conflict.

The authors—drawing from interviews, an expert roundtable, and relevant literature—assess the specific opportunities and challenges that European air forces need to address to position themselves as central contributors to NATO’s deterrent posture at the vanguard of any foreseeable combat air campaign. Specifically, they focus on maximalist conditions—high-intensity operations that would require rapid and large-scale application of airpower, conducted in the European theater. Their analysis examines the capabilities of the 13 allied air forces in Europe capable of making the most substantial contribution to large-scale combat operations.
The Alliance Evolution and Political Cohesion


“Whether NATO can survive the centrifugal forces operating to break it down will depend on how satisfactorily the alliance can adapt its military and political concepts to meet the environment of a future time period. The relationship between the viability of NATO and its ability to meet changing conditions was foreseen by its founders. This paper will examine the more important of these factors and trends and will explore some of the steps which the United States may take to help preserve the alliance.”—pp. 2–3

Vandevanter, E., *NATO’s Men on Horseback*, RAND Corporation, P-2841-1, 1964. As of May 23, 2024:
https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P2841-1.html

A discussion of the dissension between the political and military elements in NATO. The author points out the reasons for it and ways to counteract it.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P5262.html

The Atlantic Alliance is viewed as having a sound core and a persistent malaise. The sound core consists of the common need to create a steady military counterweight to Soviet power. The malaise results from the unresolvable conflict between the unity requirements of the security bond and the political separateness of the states it is supposed to hold together. The conflict has run along several fissure lines, some geographic, some functional. The resulting irritating issues have eroded the core of the alliance and made it vulnerable. But since what ails the alliance is not so much international but domestic malfunctions, the author points out what appears to be a necessary condition for its survival; states must solve their domestic problems. Failure of the liberal order in the Western countries today threatens their security more fundamentally than do their differences over diplomacy, alliance strategy, and national defense efforts.

Mendershausen, Horst, *Outlook on Western Solidarity: Political Relations in the Atlantic Alliance System*, RAND Corporation, R-1512-PR, 1976. As of May 23, 2024:
https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R1512.html

The results of a study of the alliance system that waxes and wanes among the Western European countries and the United States. The relationships among the western allies are exhibited in historical perspective, looking forward from the early 1950s and backward from the 1970s. The
central issue of the study is that of political solidarity among the states, the extent to which they have shown themselves motivated by similar or by diverse priorities in selected crisis situations and in institution building. The report especially notes the role of the European Community as a framework coexisting with the Atlantic Alliance. The outlook for Western solidarity is presented in the form of a number of observations illustrating the many ways in which the individual countries respond to challenges, past and present.


This report analyzes the range of differing views on policy with regard to NATO in the 1980s. It considers (1) the issues over which those who debate NATO policy in the 1980s differ and (2) how these differences have developed from the debates of the 1960s. The author concludes that Europe has been stable and Western Europe secure for a long time, and this security and stability will continue if NATO remains strong. In addition, both the American and European sides of NATO need to avoid suspicions of each other. Finally, the Gorbachev era may make possible substantial improvements through arms control agreements that increase Western security and East-West stability.


Part of a project to examine NATO’s performance in shaping a security policy and establishing its defense throughout the Cold War, this Note seeks to determine whether the successful resolution of the Cold War in 1989 and 1990 was a consequence of inevitable forces or of NATO’s own vision and actions. The guiding hypothesis for the study is that NATO’s members overcame great obstacles to design and execute a coherent grand strategy, security policy, military strategy, and force posture. As the 1950s unfolded, NATO moved from a relatively frail condition to a growing conventional force structure, then shifted to an emphasis on nuclear deterrence, witnessed the rearmament of West Germany and the alienation of France, and performed best in response to crisis and when under strong U.S. leadership. Overall, the 1950s may be seen as a period when NATO created a firm foundation that foreshadowed its later stunning success.
This report develops a conceptual framework for thinking about future NATO policies. It analyzes, individually and interactively, the major variables that seem likely to shape NATO’s role over the period 1990–2005. NATO’s premature dissolution could unleash forces of instability in Europe. The Alliance serves vital Western interests that transcend the specific details of East-West relations. As long as it continues to face a Soviet military threat of some sort, it will need a coherent military strategy and defense posture. What is needed is a process of change and adaptation, one aimed at transforming NATO from its primarily military orientation into a more political alliance, calling for a policy of pragmatic aims rather than ultimate visions. One evolutionary path Europe might follow is discussed. The goals of Western security policy would be to use NATO to enhance stability at each stage, guard against reversals, and encourage further evolution.

The 1960s were an especially important decade in the history of both NATO and the Cold War. During that decade, the Soviet Union acquired an invulnerable nuclear deterrent of its own. This long-feared development undermined NATO’s military strategy of massive retaliation, which had rested on U.S. nuclear dominance over the Soviet Union. As a result, NATO was compelled to look for a new strategy that was better suited to the nuclear age and relied more on flexible response and strong conventional defenses in Central Europe. This study considers to what degree and for what reasons NATO was successful in crafting an appropriate military strategy and fielding the forces required to execute it. The author examines the process of debate that NATO underwent during the 1960s, paying particular attention to the political interaction between the United States, the principal exponent of strategy reform, and its often-recalcitrant West European allies. He then examines the policy outputs of the 1960s—strategy and forces—in relation to the West’s evolving security requirements in Europe.

This book presents an in-depth historical analysis of how the Cold War unfolded in Europe from 1946–1992. It focuses on the NATO-Warsaw Pact military confrontation, but it views this confrontation in the larger framework of security policies and East-West diplomacy on both
sides. Its thesis is that the West won the Cold War because it not only forged the NATO military alliance, but also learned how to make this alliance work by mastering the art of peacetime coalition planning. The effect was to keep Western Europe secure, thereby allowing the West’s superior economic performance and political cohesion to overshadow the rival Soviet-led bloc. A further thesis is that the western alliance should be kept alive in order to deal with new problems on Europe’s horizon. The book includes a foreword by Robert Komer, former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2964.html

Russia’s 2014 annexation of Crimea and military operations in Eastern Ukraine have prompted renewed discussion about the possibility of a Russian attack on a NATO ally, particularly in the Baltics. Many analysts have raised questions about whether NATO members would respond militarily to such an attack. This report contributes to U.S. defense planning by identifying 13 key factors that are likely to affect each member’s decision to participate in a military response to either an unconventional or conventional Russian attack. Based on this analysis, the report recommends ways to reduce allies’ vulnerability to Russian influence and increase alliance cohesion.

NATO Adaptation

Ochmanek, David A., Overhauling the Alliance: Getting Back to Basics, RAND Corporation, P-7723, 1991. As of May 23, 2024:
https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P7723.html

This paper describes threats to allied security that may persist at least through the 1990s. It emphasizes that currently fashionable talk about a new “European pillar” to the alliance will not help meet these challenges. Two types of threats persist in the East—the residual threat posed by the Soviet Union and, more important, the possibility that political and economic reform will fail in the newly liberated nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Threats from the Maghreb, the Middle East, and the Persian Gulf regions include terrorism, subversion of or aggression against pro-Western regimes, immigration pressures, blackmail based on oil dependence, or threats to use weapons of mass destruction. Finally, the allies’ long-term strategy must not overlook global threats—e.g., the spread of weapons of mass destruction, access to critical raw materials, terrorism, environmental deterioration, unfair trade practices, and expanding populations—which can only be met via effective cooperation. (Presented at a conference on the future of NATO, sponsored by the Royal Institute for International Affairs [Chatham House], May 11–12, 1991.)

In the wake of the Soviet Union’s collapse and the advent of the post–Cold War era, the authors examine five options for NATO’s future military strategy and assess the organization’s superstructure.


“Three years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Europe is headed toward crisis. Memories of democracy’s triumph have faded. The immense problems facing the new democracies in the East are increasingly compounded by political gridlock, economic recession and resurgent nationalism. The revolutions of 1989 not only toppled communism; they unleashed a set of dynamics that have unraveled the peace orders of Yalta and Versailles. War in the Balkans, instability in East-Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, growing doubts about the European Community’s future as well as the future role of the United States—all underscore the lack of any stable post–Cold War European security order.

Nationalism and ethnic conflict have already led to two world wars in Europe. Whether Europe unravels for a third time this century depends on if the West summons the political will and strategic vision to address the causes of potential instability and conflict before it is too late. A new U.S.-European strategic bargain is needed, one that extends NATO’s collective defense and security arrangements to those areas where the seeds for future conflict in Europe lie: the Atlantic alliance’s eastern and southern borders.”—p. 28


In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on European Affairs, the author concentrates on what he sees as the three main challenges facing NATO: (1) adopting a new Strategic Concept which will prepare NATO to meet the challenges it is likely to face in the coming decades; (2) managing the enlargement process in a manner that enhances European stability; and (3) achieving a satisfactory settlement of the Kosovo conflict that ensures the realization of NATO’s principal objectives and preserves the cohesion of the Alliance.
This book offers a thorough appraisal of Operation Allied Force, NATO’s 78-day air war to compel the president of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic, to end his campaign of “ethnic cleansing” in Kosovo. The author sheds light both on the operation’s strengths and on its most salient weaknesses. He outlines the key highlights of the air war and examines the various factors that interacted to induce Milosevic to capitulate when he did. He then explores air power’s most critical accomplishments in Operation Allied Force as well as the problems that hindered the operation both in its planning and in its execution. Finally, he assesses Operation Allied Force from a political and strategic perspective, calling attention to those issues that are likely to have the greatest bearing on future military policymaking. The book concludes that the air war, although by no means the only factor responsible for the allies’ victory, certainly set the stage for Milosevic’s surrender by making it clear that he had little to gain by holding out. It concludes that in the end, Operation Allied Force’s most noteworthy distinction may lie in the fact that the allies prevailed despite the myriad impediments they faced.

Operation Allied Force, the 1999 NATO air campaign that sought to prevent a wider humanitarian disaster in Kosovo, represents the triumph of air power to some observers and highlights air power’s limitations for others. While representing a successful cooperative allied military action for NATO, it also suggests limits to U.S.-European military cooperation. This report, a dispassionate assessment of Operation Allied Force, provides perspectives from both sides of the Atlantic as well as political and military implications. The campaign highlighted the growing gap between U.S. military capabilities and those of Europe, the potential consequences of joining a limited-objective operation that expands to undesirable proportions and duration, the absence of consensus both within the U.S. military and the Alliance on the best use of air power, the vulnerabilities of a multimember military coalition engaged in an essentially humanitarian operation facing an adversary fighting for its survival, and the limitations inherent in a “fight-and-negotiate” strategy that left an unrepentant adversary in power. The report concludes that the European allies can expect continued emphasis on the Defense Capabilities Initiative, a U.S. plan adopted by NATO that stresses the need for all NATO forces to be interoperable, deployable, and sustainable. Furthermore, the Europeans must reverse recent trends of defense reductions and invest more in order to realize major improvements in defense capabilities.

The long-term success of the counterterror campaign will depend on concerted cooperation from European states, but a key question is the extent to which that cooperation should be pursued through European multilateral institutions. NATO has not yet reoriented itself to challenge terrorism, although it has adopted a number of initiatives to improve its counterterror capabilities. The European Union is limited in its military and intelligence capabilities, although it has taken a number of initiatives in Justice and Home Affairs. This study argues that the United States should pursue military and intelligence cooperation on a bilateral basis, and it should increasingly pursue financial and law enforcement cooperation on a multilateral basis. The United States might adopt a more multilateral approach as cooperation within the EU increases. Multilateral cooperation with a strengthening EU would enhance the ability of states on both sides of the Atlantic to prevent terrorism and prosecute those involved in terrorist activities.


With the conclusion of the Prague summit, NATO faces a number of new challenges in its Eastern agenda. First, it must ensure that the democratic transitions in Central and Eastern Europe are consolidated and that there is no backsliding. These countries must modernize their military forces and make them interoperable with those of NATO. Second, NATO must remain engaged in and ensure the security of the Baltic states. The problem of Kaliningrad should be addressed and the enclave stabilized. Third, NATO needs to develop a post-enlargement strategy for Ukraine to support the country’s continued democratic evolution and integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. Fourth, Russia must be incorporated into a broader European and Euro-Atlantic security framework. Finally, NATO needs to develop a coherent strategy toward the Caucasus and Central Asia. The Partnership for Peace can provide the framework for developing relations with these countries. Other U.S. and NATO policies can encourage greater openness, reform, and democratic practices. These challenges, moreover, must be addressed in a new strategic context. In the post-Prague period, the key issue is NATO’s transformation and its strategic purpose: What should its missions and strategic rationale be?
NATO’s success in Afghanistan—or lack thereof—will have significant implications for the alliance itself. Success could promote the image of a capable global security alliance. Failure, or even an indeterminate outcome, would cloud the alliance’s own future. The authors examine the risks, commitments, and obligations of the current mission in light of NATO’s history and with an eye toward the future, as well as the effects on the alliance’s internal dynamics. Drawing on a wide range of sources, the authors describe how NATO came to be involved, concerns and tensions that have developed over the investments and risks that member and nonmember states have in the operation, management of the expectations of nations and peoples, and the need for a coherent, comprehensive, and coordinated long-term strategy. The list of issues NATO faces is long and daunting and extends beyond the borders of the member countries. If the goal is indeed to look toward the future, however, the alliance must confront them; failure to do so would risk the long-term success and sustainability of the alliance.

Defense of NATO in cyberspace requires an understanding of the threats the alliance must face, knowing where it must act, and ensuring that the alliance has the capabilities and capacity available to successfully defend itself. The authors of this Perspective review the new security challenges NATO faces and discuss current efforts by NATO to consider and adapt its structure, forces, systems, and processes to prepare itself for integrating cyberspace as an operational domain. The authors discuss many challenges with successfully operating in cyberspace and provide particular focus on indications and warning (I&W) as an emerging need that all states should address to maintain and ensure an effective military presence within cyberspace. Cyber I&W is a relatively new capability for all modern states and military alliances, and the authors explore some of the existing scholarship and adapt a leading framework for the NATO context.

Russia’s conventional capabilities pose a serious threat to NATO that remains mostly untested. Where it has historically succeeded is in using various types of hostile measures to sow disorder, weaken democratic institutions, and undermine NATO cohesion and what Russia perceives as the eastward expansion of Western institutions. However, Russia also has a long track record of strategic shortfalls, and even some ineptitude. Formulating strategies for addressing these actions demands a clear understanding of how and why Russian leaders employ hostile measures—for example, economic embargoes, limited military incursions, cyberattacks, and information campaigns. A historical review of Soviet-era power dynamics and detailed case studies of Russian hostile measures in the post–Soviet era help clarify the conditions under which Russia employs hostile measures and the vulnerabilities it exploits in the countries it targets—as well as the messages these measures send to other key audiences, such as Russia’s domestic public, the Russian diaspora, and Western powers that Russia perceives as encroaching on its sphere of influence. NATO and other Western powers will benefit from exploring opportunities to deter, prevent, and counter Russian hostile behavior in the so-called gray zone short of war, where daily adversarial competition occurs. Many of the behaviors that Russia exhibits in the gray zone will no doubt extend to conventional war.


NATO members maintain amphibious capabilities that provide versatile and responsive forces for crisis response and national defense. Like the posture of other military capabilities within the Alliance, NATO’s collective amphibious force posture depends primarily on the sum of individual national developments. In light of these developments, this paper examines the past, present, and future of NATO’s amphibious forces. Both the historical and recent employment of these forces offer pertinent lessons for unlocking the full potential of amphibious forces and reimagining operational concepts to address the evolving threat landscape in a new era of great-power competition. Even as NATO leaders focus on evolving their amphibious forces to address emerging threats, it is important that they sustain the demonstrated value of these capabilities for baseline activities and crisis response. A visible and aggressive amphibious exercise program advances Alliance objectives by improving key military capabilities, reassuring Alliance members and partners, and demonstrating military strength to potential adversaries.
In the course of this research, RAND investigators identified several lines of effort that should be pursued to advance NATO’s amphibious capabilities. First, the Alliance should develop a comprehensive concept paper that articulates the value, capability, and principles for employing its amphibious capabilities. Next, the Alliance should continue to evolve its brigade and multi-brigade capabilities. Finally, it is important that NATO members with amphibious capabilities collaboratively explore new concepts and promising technologies, such as long-range precision fires and unmanned systems.

NATO Expansion


This article, published in the journal Foreign Affairs, argued that instability along an eastern arc, stretching from Central Europe through the Balkans, Russia, the Caucasus, and Turkey, and a southern arc, ranging from North Africa and the Mediterranean to the Middle East and Southwest Asia, required NATO to adapt to deal with potential crises in these regions rather than focusing on defense of only Alliance territory. It recommended beginning the process of integration of East-Central European countries into NATO and the European Community as they fulfilled certain criteria. The authors contended that if democratic governance and international stability failed to take root in the nations formerly dominated by the Soviet Union, nationalism would almost certainly lead to an eruption of competition among these countries and growing instability that would spill over into Western Europe. They argued further that NATO should transform from “an alliance based on collective defense against a specific threat into an alliance committed to projecting democracy, stability and crisis management in a broader strategic sense.” At the same time, they argued that the West should support the fragile democratic transformation in Russia, and they set out some basic principles that could govern a new, cooperative relationship between NATO and the European Community on the one hand and Russia on the other. Such a charter, they proposed, “would be designed to reassure Russia that it will be included in efforts to build a new European security order.”


This article, published in the journal Survival, presents an analytical framework for how to expand NATO. Its purpose is not to lay out any single, fixed blueprint but to present a
framework for thinking about the issues, options, and trade-offs that the Alliance faces. The framework presented focuses on how the Alliance should expand to East-Central Europe and develop a policy package vis-a-vis both Russia and Ukraine.


Several Eastern European countries, with Poland in the forefront, are eager to join NATO. For its part, NATO has reaffirmed that alliance membership remains open to other European states. Although no timetable has been set for admitting new members, the alliance has begun a year-long study to make plans for its expansion. One subject that will likely be debated in NATO capitals is the cost of extending security guarantees to new members and the adequacy of the new members’ military contributions to their own defense. This paper uses the relative and absolute values of NATO members’ military force contributions to the defense of the Central Front during the Cold War as standards for judging the adequacy of military forces of potential new members. Applying these standards to Poland, as an illustrative example, leads to the conclusion that Poland is well qualified for membership today. Not surprisingly, the burden on current NATO members to defend the Central Front, if there were a resurgent Russian threat to the alliance, would be greater if Poland were not a member of the alliance than if Poland were a member.


In early 1997, NATO will begin to make initial decisions on enlargement. Although no official list of candidates exists, it is considered unlikely that the Baltic states will make the first round of new Alliance members. Dealing with the Baltics in the context of NATO enlargement is one of the most delicate questions facing the Alliance. This study examines the need to develop a strategy for strengthening Baltic independence and anchoring these states in the West, for a variety of compelling reasons. If mishandled, the Baltic issue has the potential to derail NATO enlargement, redraw the security map in northeastern Europe, and provoke a crisis between the West and Russia. This article defines the building blocks for such a strategy while admitting that implementing it will not be easy. It can only happen if this issue is given high policy priority and if an effective policy coordination mechanism is established.
The interaction between the West and Russia promises to be a defining one for East Central Europe’s emerging geopolitics, and it will affect the stability of Europe as a whole. Focused on the big strategic picture, this study presents a political-military analysis of the dynamics likely to unfold and of the actions the United States and its allies can take to shape a positive outcome in achieving their goals of admitting new NATO members while encouraging overall regional stability. It begins with a theoretical framework for the strategic thinking that must be done about Europe’s new geopolitics and an in-depth assessment of Russia’s new statist foreign policy and defense strategy. It then examines East Central Europe’s current and future geopolitics, and concludes with an analysis of alternative strategic and military destinations, coupled with plans for getting to them, that the United States and its allies can pursue for NATO enlargement.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/RP617.html

The NATO enlargement debate has focused on the question of which countries should be offered membership in the first round. Equally important is how the alliance deals with countries left out in that round—the so-called “have-nots.” Now that the process is moving from declarations of intent to action, members must forge a clear policy toward the have-nots if NATO is to achieve its post–Cold War goal of security integration and cooperation in Europe. The primary objective of a NATO strategy toward the have-nots is prevention of a destabilizing backlash in those countries seeking membership but not included in enlargement’s first round. The strategy suggested in this article provides a way of managing the dilemma without ceding to Russia a real or shadow veto over enlargement.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/RP622.html

“What will it cost to enlarge NATO? The question of costs is moving to the forefront in the enlargement debate as the Alliance prepares to decide on a first tranche of new members. Opponents of enlargement insist that the costs will be so high that enlargement should not take place. Proponents claim that the costs are affordable. Across the Alliance, elected officials—
those who control the purse-strings—are starting to inquire what enlargement will mean for the taxpayer—American, British, Polish or other.

Establishing what NATO enlargement will cost is not just a financial calculation, but also a political and strategic one. The costs of enlargement will depend on who joins the Alliance, how new Article 5 commitments are implemented in terms of military strategy, how defence postures in both new and old members are adjusted, and how the financial burdens are distributed among NATO members. Addressing the cost issue requires the Alliance to grapple with many problems that have previously been held in abeyance. The Alliance cannot move forward on enlargement and expect the support of NATO parliaments and publics unless it clarifies the implications and consequences of enlargement, including its costs.

This article provides a framework and methodology for assessing what NATO enlargement will cost, as well as estimates for a range of alternative defence postures that an enlarged NATO might embrace. Providing such estimates requires making some assumptions on issues that the Alliance has not yet officially decided. For illustrative purposes, the analysis presented here assumes that the first tranche of enlargement will concentrate on the Visegrad countries—Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia—even though the latter’s prospects have clearly diminished. The framework and methodology used, however, could easily be applied to a broader as well as a narrower list of candidate countries.”—p. 5

https://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/RP786.html

Together with the future enlargement of the European Union, the integration of Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic into NATO will significantly diminish the prospect that Central Europe will again become a source of international tension and geopolitical rivalry. However, the entry of these three countries into NATO does not end the process of enlargement. At the Madrid Summit, the Alliance agreed to maintain an “open door” to new members. This raises new policy dilemmas for NATO, from who should next be invited to join, when that invitation should be issued, what effect further enlargement will have on NATO cohesion and military effectiveness, and most important, how enlargement contributes to NATO’s overall transformation and new missions. Many factors argue for a deliberate, measured approach to further enlargement, one that gives NATO time to sort out its strategic priorities. At the same time, NATO needs to enhance the credibility of the open door by identifying concrete steps that will ensure that the door truly remains open.
https://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1243.html

In the 1990s, NATO began a course of enlargement and transformation to remain relevant in Europe’s post–Cold-War security environment. As part of its commitment to enlargement, it admitted three new members—Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic—in 1999 and has plans to admit more countries in the future. NATO’s enlargement has profound military implications for the United States and its allies in terms of future planning and shaping strategies. Its enlargement and its transformation, from an organization for the collective defense of its members to one whose mission includes conflict prevention and conflict management throughout Europe (including beyond its treaty area), have both been driven primarily by political imperatives—i.e., not by a sense of direct threat, but by an environment-shaping agenda of democratization and integration. This report develops and applies an analytical framework for thinking about the determinants of future NATO enlargement, the specific defense challenges they pose, and shaping policies that might aid in addressing these challenges. The approximately twelve countries that could conceivably join NATO in the next 10 to 15 years are evaluated according to political, strategic, and military (particularly airpower) criteria to determine where they stand in relation to NATO’s established preconditions for membership consideration and NATO’s strategic rationale for issuing invitations to join. The result is a rating of each potential member’s relative readiness for and likelihood of acceding to NATO.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT196.html

Testimony for the Subcommittee on Europe of the Committee on International Relations, United States House of Representatives on April 17, 2002.