

The Role of the Assembly

Founded in 1955, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) serves as the consultative inter-parliamentary organisation for the North Atlantic Alliance.

Bringing together members of parliaments throughout the Atlantic Alliance, the NATO PA provides an essential link between NATO and the parliaments of its member nations, helping to build parliamentary and public consensus in support of Alliance policies.

At the same time, it facilitates parliamentary awareness and understanding of key security issues and contributes to a greater transparency of NATO policies. Crucially, it helps maintain and strengthen the transatlantic relationship, which underpins the Atlantic Alliance.

Since the end of the Cold War the Assembly has assumed a new role by integrating into its work parliamentarians from those countries in Central and Eastern Europe and beyond who seek a closer association with NATO. This integration has provided both political and practical assistance and has contributed to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy throughout the Euro-Atlantic region, thereby complementing and reinforcing NATO's own programme of partnership and cooperation.

The headquarters of the Assembly's 28-strong International Secretariat staff members is located in central Brussels.

How the Assembly works

The NATO PA consists of 257 delegates from the 28 NATO member countries. Delegates from 13 associate countries; the European Parliament; 4 regional partner and Mediterranean associate member countries; as well as 8 parliamentary observers and 2 inter-parliamentary assemblies also take part in its activities.

The Assembly's governing body is the Standing Committee, which is composed of the Head of each member delegation, the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Secretary General.

The International Secretariat under its Secretary General, is responsible for all administration and the bulk of research and analysis that supports the Assembly's Committees, Sub-Committees and other groups.

The five Committees are: Civil Dimension of Security; Defence and Security; Economics and Security; Political; Science and Technology. They are charged with examining all major contemporary issues in their fields. Other Assembly bodies include the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group to enhance parliamentary dialogue and understanding with countries of the Middle East and the North African region, the Ukraine-NATO Inter-parliamentary Council and the Georgia-NATO Inter-parliamentary Council. The NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee was discontinued in April 2014.

Two sessions are held each year - in the Spring and Autumn ('Annual') - in different countries. The Committees and Sub-Committees produce reports, which are discussed in draft form at the Assembly's Spring Session. The reports are then revised and updated for discussion, amendment and adoption at the Assembly's Annual Session in the Autumn.

At the Annual Session, the Committees also produce policy recommendations - which are voted on by the full Assembly and forwarded to the North Atlantic Council. As well as meetings during Sessions, the Committees and Sub-Committees meet several times a year in member and associate nations where they receive briefings from leading government and parliamentary representatives, as well as senior academics and experts.

Financing

The Assembly is directly funded by member parliaments and governments, and is financially and administratively separate from NATO itself.

The Rose-Roth Programme

A central part of the Assembly's work is the Rose-Roth Programme of partnership and cooperation - initially with Central and Eastern European countries but subsequently throughout the Euro-Atlantic region. This programme seeks to assist partner countries, mainly in the Balkans and the South Caucasus, through a challenging transition process, which involves the implementation of difficult political and economic reforms.

The Rose-Roth Programme involves a series of seminars focused on regional and topical security issues and training programmes for parliamentary staff and members of Parliament. The aim is to enhance parliamentary awareness, build contacts and provide experience and expertise. Particular attention is paid to promoting the principle of the democratic control of armed forces and to the development of effective parliamentary oversight of defence and the military.

The NATO Orientation Programme

The NATO Orientation Programme is focused primarily on young or newly elected members of parliament from NATO and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) nations, as well as those newly assigned to security or foreign affairs responsibilities. The programme aims at providing an in-depth overview of the functioning and policies of NATO and SHAPE as well as of the Alliance's evolving relationships with its many partners. The Programme was launched in 2000 and is held annually in Brussels.

The Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum

In 2001, growing concern about the apparent drift in transatlantic attitudes, perceptions and policies, prompted the Assembly's Standing Committee to instigate a "Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum" to help identify the precise nature of the divergence in transatlantic thinking and to explore ways in which these differences could be redressed. The programme includes discussions with senior US administration figures and academic experts.

The Forum is held annually in Washington, D.C. in cooperation with the *National Defense University* and the *Atlantic Council of the United States*.

The Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group*

In the context of its outreach activities, the Assembly created in 1995 a Mediterranean Special Group with the aim of opening a political dialogue with legislators from countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The programme gradually expanded and received new impetus following the Arab uprisings. The Assembly has established relations with the Parliaments of six countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, as well as with the Palestinian National Council. Preliminary contacts have been established with Libya as well as with some countries of the Gulf and of the Sahel.

* Formerly referred to as the Mediterranean Special Group

The yearly activities of the Group include a visit to the region, and two seminars, one of which is held in cooperation with the Italian Parliament. These meetings seek to enhance parliamentary awareness of the problems of the region, promote a political dialogue between parliamentarians, and ultimately provide experience and expertise to legislators from Maghreb and Middle East countries.

Membership of the Assembly

Member Delegations

Member States	Delegates	
United States	36	
France	18	
Germany	18	
Italy	18	
United Kingdom	18	
Canada	12	
Poland	12	
Spain	12	
Turkey	12	
Romania	10	
Belgium	7	
Czech Republic	7	
Greece	7	
Hungary	7	
Netherlands	7	
Portugal	7	
Bulgaria	6	
Denmark	5	
Norway	5	
Slovakia	5	
Croatia	5	
Lithuania	4	
Albania	4	
Estonia	3	
Iceland	3	
Latvia	3	
Luxembourg	3	
Slovenia	3	
28	257	

Associate Delegations

Ukraine	8	
Austria	5	
Azerbaijan	5	
Serbia	5	
Sweden	5	
Switzerland	5	
Finland	4	
Georgia	4	
Armenia	3	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3	
Republic of Moldova	3	
Montenegro	3	
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*	3	
13	56	

European Parliament Delegation

10	
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Regional Partner and Mediterranean Associate Member Delegations

Algeria	3	
Morocco	3	
Israel	3	
Jordan	3	
4	12	

Parliamentary Observer Delegations

Assembly of Kosovo	2	
Australia	2	
Egypt	2	
Japan	2	
Kazakhstan	2	
Palestinian National Council	2	
Republic of Korea	2	
Tunisia	2	
8	16	

Inter-parliamentary Assembly Delegations

OSCE PA	2	
PACE	2	
2	4	

* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

Committees, Sub-Committees & Working Groups

Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security (CDS)
Sub-Committee on Democratic Governance (CDSDG)

Defence and Security Committee (DSC)
Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)
Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Cooperation (DSCTC)

Economics and Security Committee (ESC)
Sub-Committee on Transition and Development (ESCTD)
Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Economic Relations (ESCTER)

Political Committee (PC)
Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships (PCNP)
Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations (PCTR)

Science and Technology Committee (STC)
Sub-Committee on Technology Trends and Security (STCTS)

Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM)

Ukraine-NATO Inter-parliamentary Council (UNIC)

Georgia-NATO Inter-parliamentary Council (GNIC)

NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee (NRPC)
(Discontinued as of April 2014)



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