



DNAT

Delegation for
relations with
the NATO
Parliamentary
Assembly

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The delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

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What is the EP delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (DNAT)?

On 12 December 2001, the European Parliament decided to set up an inter-parliamentary delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (DNAT). DNAT is composed of **10 Members** from the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) and is supported by a secretariat whose staff members come from the SEDE secretariat.

DNAT's activities are aimed at bringing forward the position of the EU, and of the European Parliament in particular, to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly with a view to further developing the relationship between the EU and NATO, while respecting the independent nature of both organisations. DNAT's role is particularly relevant in addressing the common challenges facing the EU and NATO: 1. countering hybrid threats; 2. operational cooperation, including at sea and on migration; 3. cyber security and defence; 4. defence capabilities; 5. the defence industry and research; 6. exercises; 7. supporting the capacity-building efforts undertaken by Eastern and Southern partners.

DNAT web page:

<http://europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dnat/home>

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NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA)

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) is the inter-parliamentary organisation of lawmakers from the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance and associate members, including the European Parliament. Founded in 1955, it serves

as the consultative interparliamentary organisation for the North Atlantic Alliance.

The North Atlantic Treaty signed in Washington on 4 April 1949 makes no explicit mention of an inter-parliamentary assembly and, since formal recognition would require amending the Washington Treaty, not all governments or all parliamentarians seek such a formal link. Despite this, the Assembly has built a strong and close working relationship with NATO over the years.

The Assembly's principal objective is to promote parliamentary awareness and to foster mutual understanding among Alliance parliamentarians of the key security challenges facing the transatlantic partnership and NATO policies. The discussions and debates held in the Assembly introduce a parliamentary dimension to the development of Alliance policies.

The NATO PA is made up of 266 delegates from the 29 NATO member countries. Delegates from 12 associate countries, four Mediterranean associate countries and eight parliamentary observer or associate delegations (one of which is the European Parliament) also take part in its activities.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly is directly funded by member parliaments and governments, and is financially and administratively separate from NATO itself. It is supported by an International Secretariat based in Brussels.

For more information, please visit the NATO PA web page: <https://www.nato-pa.int/>.

How does the NATO PA work?

The Assembly holds about 40 events each year. The two main Assembly meetings are the Spring Session (usually towards the end of May) and the Annual Session (usually in October or November). The sessions are held in member or associate

member countries. Up to 10 Members of DNAT may take part in each of the two sessions. The DNAT delegation holds a preparatory meeting before each NATO PA session and then debriefs on the outcome of the session at a subsequent SEDE meeting. DNAT meetings are also held on a variety of relevant topics, and high-ranking office-holders from both the EU and NATO take part in these, along with prominent experts in the respective fields.

The Assembly has five specialised Committees (and eight Subcommittees), plus special working groups, and organises seminars held mainly throughout Europe and North America. DNAT Members may participate in meetings of the committees (and subcommittees) held outside NATO PA sessions upon the agreement of the DNAT Chair and up to a limit of 20 delegation trips per year¹. During the 8th parliamentary term, an average of around five DNAT Members took part in the sessions.

The calendar of NATO PA events for the following year is usually known in December (with the exception of the sessions, which are planned well in advance²). The NATO PA events are organised and managed by the NATO PA secretariat together with the host parliament.

At the **Spring Session**, each of the five committees holds a one-day meeting to consider reports and to meet with government officials and policy experts. On the last day, the Assembly

¹ On 28 October 2004, the Conference of Presidents authorised DNAT members to attend NATO PA meetings (no more than two members per parliamentary committee), provided that the calendar of EP parliamentary activities is respected.

² The 2019 Spring Session was held in Bratislava from 31 May to 3 June 2019 (with no DNAT participation due to the EP elections). The 2019 Annual Session will take place in London (UK) from 11 to 14 October 2019 and the 2020 Spring Session is planned to be held in Luxembourg at the end of May 2020.

meets in plenary to conduct Assembly business, debate key issues and hear from key national and international leaders. At the **Annual Session**, reports are adopted, taken note of, or rejected by the Committees. The plenary sitting of the Annual Session adopts resolutions and is usually addressed by the Assembly's President, senior representatives of the government of the host nation, and NATO's Secretary General. Elections also take place for the Assembly officers. The President and five Vice-Presidents are elected for one-year terms and can be re-elected once. The Treasurer is elected for a two-year term and can be re-elected twice.

The **Standing Committee** is the Assembly's decision-making body (the equivalent of the Conference of Presidents in the European Parliament). It consists of one member from each member country, nominated by each member delegation. The President, the Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Chairs of the Assembly's Committees are members of the Standing Committee ex officio. The Chair of DNAT is usually invited to the official dinner of the Standing Committee held at each Session.

The Assembly's five specialised **Committees** meet during plenary sessions and, increasingly, at other times. DNAT Members attending the Spring or Annual Sessions are usually asked to attend and follow one of the Committees during the Session.

The Committees are:

- the Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security,
- the Defence and Security Committee,
- the Economics and Security Committee,
- the Political Committee,
- the Science and Technology Committee.

Each of the eight **Sub-Committees** usually meets twice per year at a location depending on the interests of the Sub-Committee concerned.

The Subcommittees are:

- the Sub-Committee on Democratic Governance,
- the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Cooperation,
- the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities,
- the Sub-Committee on Transition and Development,
- the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Economic Relations,
- the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations,
- the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships,
- the Sub-Committee on Technology Trends and Security.

Other **Assembly bodies and activities** include: the Rose-Roth Programme of partnership and cooperation (which seeks to assist partner countries, mainly in the Western Balkans and the South Caucasus, through a challenging transition process), the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (which seeks to enhance parliamentary dialogue and understanding with countries of the Middle East and the North African region), the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council and the Georgia-NATO Interparliamentary Council. The Assembly has an annual NATO Orientation Programme that is open to new members of delegations, and it also organises an annual Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum in the United States. The NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee was discontinued in April 2014. Joint high-level hearings are organised with the European Parliament (DNAT) on subjects of common interest. The most recent of these was entitled ‘Countering new threats together:

a new era of EU-NATO cooperation’ and was held on the EP premises in Brussels on 4-5 June 2018.

DNAT status within the NATO PA

At present, DNAT has a *sui generis* status within the NATO PA which can be described as being **more than an Observer and less than an Associate Member**.

According to a decision of the NATO PA Standing Committee in 2005, DNAT has the following **rights**:

- at the invitation of Committees, the possibility of presenting draft reports³
- the possibility of presenting texts⁴, but not amendments
- no voting rights
- it is invited to the Rose-Roth seminars, the Mediterranean Special Group seminars, and the activities of the Committees and Sub-Committees⁵

Since setting up DNAT, the European Parliament has aimed to enhance the status of its delegation and, in particular, to obtain the right to table amendments. DNAT Members are encouraged to participate actively in the Assembly and to make full use of their current rights.

³ This right has not been exercised so far.

⁴ According to the NATO PA rules of procedure, these texts can be declarations, resolutions, recommendations, orders and opinions. This right has not been exercised so far.

⁵ Except those excluded by the Standing Committee.

What are the rights and obligations of DNAT Members?

DNAT Members are reminded by the Conference of Delegation Chairs that MEPs belonging to a delegation must **defend the views expressed by the European Parliament** through its resolutions.

If there are no resolutions on a certain issue or if, at a NATO PA session, a DNAT Member wishes to express a personal opinion that is not in line with the position adopted by the European Parliament as such, this must be made very clear.

In order to assist DNAT Members in this task, and before each session, the secretariat provides a list of European Parliament resolutions related to the NATO PA reports that will be examined and/or adopted at each NATO PA session.

The European Parliament's position on EU-NATO relations⁶

The most recent EP resolution that specifically touches on this subject is the [resolution of 13 June 2018 on EU -NATO relations](#) (2017/2276(INI)), Rapporteur: Ioan Mircea PAȘCU (S&D).

In this resolution, Parliament:

- Noted that the EU and NATO face **similar strategic challenges** and considered that their **strategic partnership** was fundamental for tackling them.
- Affirmed that NATO is the **cornerstone of collective defence and deterrence in Europe**.
- Stressed the importance of developing a **common European strategic culture** and that the Union must work

⁶ NATO-related EP resolutions during Parliament's 8th legislative term include the following: [European Defence Fund 2021–2027](#) (adopted on 18 April 2019); [Decision establishing a European Peace Facility](#) (28 March 2019); [Annual report on the implementation of the common security and defence policy](#) (12 December 2018); [Military mobility](#) (11 December 2018); [European Defence Industrial Development Programme \(EDIDP\)](#) (3 July 2018); [EU-NATO relations](#) (13 June 2018); [Annual report on the implementation of the common security and defence policy](#) (13 December 2017); [Constitutional, legal and institutional implications of a common security and defence policy: possibilities offered by the Lisbon Treaty](#) (16 March 2017); [Implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy \(Article 36 TEU\)](#) (14 December 2016); [Implementation of the common security and defence policy](#) (23 November 2016); [European Defence Union](#) (22 November 2016); [Space capabilities for European security and defence](#) (8 June 2016); [Mutual defence clause \(Article 42\(7\) TEU\)](#) (21 January 2016); [Strategic military situation in the Black Sea basin following the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia](#) (11 June 2015); [Security and defence capabilities in Europe](#) (21 May 2015); [Financing the common security and defence policy](#) (21 May 2015); [Implementation of the common security and defence policy](#) (21 May 2015).

to strengthen its strategic autonomy. It welcomed the launch of **Permanent Structured Cooperation** (PESCO) and highlighted its potential to strengthen the European contribution within NATO.

- Emphasised the need to **strengthen EU-NATO cooperation on missions and operations**.
- Welcomed the re-affirmation of **US commitment** to NATO and European security. Emphasised the importance of improving NATO's rapid reinforcement capabilities through improving **EU and national infrastructure**, removing bureaucratic and infrastructural barriers to the swift movement of forces and by pre-positioning military equipment and supplies.
- Believed that strengthening the Europe of Defence should benefit both organisations, and highlighted the importance of implementing the **principles of openness, reciprocity and full respect for the decision-making autonomy** of both organisations.
- Encouraged all EU Member States that are also members of NATO to step up their efforts to achieve the **2% of GDP** defence target, and to allocate 20% of this spending to the acquisition of major new equipment.
- Emphasised the need for the EU to ensure a close security and defence relationship with the **United Kingdom** after Brexit.

The resolution emphasised also the need to:

- improve the coordination of crisis response mechanisms to respond coherently to **hybrid threats**;
- strengthen **cooperation on the exchange of classified information and intelligence analysis**, particularly in the

fight against terrorism but also with regard to irregular migration flows;

- intensify the exchange and sharing of information in the field of **cybersecurity**;
- take into account the importance of the **role played by women** in CSDP and NATO missions, especially regarding relations with women and children in conflict zones.



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