



FINNISH
GOVERNMENT

Report on Finland's Accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

15 May 2022



Finnish Government 2022

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Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a fundamental change has taken place in the security and operating environment of Finland and Europe. Jointly agreed international commitments and principles of European security did not prevent war in Europe. The Government report on changes in the security environment (2022:18) assesses the changes in the security environment and the effects these changes have on Finland in detail.

Joining North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a process, which is based on Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty. NATO member countries make decisions to invite new member countries by consensus. New member countries accede to the North Atlantic Treaty with full rights and obligations. As a member of NATO, Finland would commit to the organisation's common policies. NATO's decision-making is based on consensus.

Through NATO membership, Finland would be part of NATO's collective defence and, thus, would be covered by the security guarantees enshrined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. The deterrent effect of Finland's defence would be considerably stronger than it is at present. If Finland were a NATO member country and became a target of military force, it would defend itself with the support of the Alliance based on arrangements planned and rehearsed in advance. As a member of NATO, Finland would participate in making decisions on security policy issues that are of key importance to Finland. The combination of a strong national defence capability and NATO membership would be a credible security solution. Finland's defence capability and resilience would strengthen NATO's collective defence throughout the territory of the Alliance.

By joining NATO, Finland would strengthen its own security in the changed operating environment. Finland's membership in NATO would strengthen stability and security in the Baltic Sea region and Northern Europe. The threshold for using military force in the Baltic Sea region and Finland's neighbouring areas would rise.

Accession talks cover five areas. These are political issues, legal issues, resource issues, information security issues, and defence and military issues.

Through NATO membership, Finland would commit to the North Atlantic Treaty, i.e. the Washington Treaty, and to documents guiding the organisation's activities. The most important of these documents is NATO's Strategic Concept, which defines the Alliance's core tasks: collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security.

NATO's annual budget in 2022 is approximately EUR 2.5 billion. All member countries participate in the common-funded budgets. The common-funded budgets consist mainly of three components: the civil and military budgets and the NATO Security Investment Programme (NSIP). Finland's contribution to the civil budget would be funded through the budget item administered by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Other costs arising from NATO membership would be funded through budget items administered by other branches of government.

The annual additional direct cost of NATO membership would be approximately 1–1.5 per cent of Finland's current defence budget. In addition, participation in NATO's peacetime collective defence missions, multinational capability projects, command and control systems and readiness requirements would also involve additional costs. NATO member countries have committed to spending 2 per cent of GDP on defence (the Defence Investment Pledge). Resources for border security and security of supply must also be ensured. NATO membership would also entail direct costs from the posting of additional personnel to NATO Headquarters and to the NATO Command Structure and other structures. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior, the Mission of Finland to NATO and the Finnish Defence Forces would have to increase the number of personnel working on NATO matters.

The Constitution of Finland does not limit Finland's ability to join a military alliance. Membership in NATO would not entail expanding the national defence obligation set out in the Constitution to cover the collective defence of the entire territory of the North Atlantic Treaty. Finnish legislation is primarily built on the notion of national defence, but legislation has recently been developed to support the provision and reception of international assistance and other international cooperation. This ensures that Finnish legislation is compatible with NATO's obligations, though legislation could also be reviewed after accession, if necessary. In addition to the North Atlantic Treaty, as a NATO member, Finland would have to commit to NATO's other international agreements, which concern the status of forces and personnel, information security as well as technical issues. NATO member countries cannot maintain existing treaties or commit to new treaties that would be contrary to the North Atlantic Treaty. Accession would not affect the status of the Åland Islands, which is based on international treaties, and this status is not an obstacle to accession. Finland respects the demilitarisation of Åland and is prepared to take necessary measures to defend Åland's neutrality. Consequently, there is no conflict between the North Atlantic Treaty and the treaties concerning the Åland Islands.

As a Partnership for Peace (PfP) country, Finland is already committed to protecting classified information exchanged between Finland and NATO on the basis of Finland's and NATO's mutual information security agreement and administrative arrangement. The compatibility of Finland's legislation with NATO information security obligations was ensured when Finland concluded the aforementioned information security agreements, and no significant needs to amend legislation are expected to arise.

Finland meets NATO's defence and military membership criteria. As a member of NATO, Finland's defence would be integrated into the Alliance's collective defence, which would mean participating in all parts of the planning and implementation of collective defence. Finland must have the capability to allocate Defence Forces troops to assist other NATO member countries and to receive troops from other NATO member countries in Finland. Finland would consider it important that arrangements for the defence of Northern Europe could be planned as a whole within NATO.

As a member of NATO, Finland would participate in the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP). In a manner to be separately agreed, Finland would also participate in some peacetime collective defence missions, for example the Baltic and Icelandic air policing missions, and in readiness forces. Finland would also participate in NATO exercises more extensively than at present and would participate in NATO's operational plans and in the related command structures and command and control systems. Finland would join the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence, would participate in the exchange of a shared air situation picture and maritime situation picture and in deeper intelligence cooperation. Finland would also participate in NATO's civil preparedness cooperation more extensively than at present.

The integration of Finland's defence into NATO's collective defence would be carried out gradually following accession.

The Government is committed to ensuring that Parliament and its committees are able to closely monitor the processing of the application and the accession talks.

The Government proposes that the President of the Republic of Finland decide, pursuant to section 93, paragraph 1 of the Constitution of Finland, that Finland will apply for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) after Parliament has been heard.