

New NATO Headquarters



A new home for the NATO family

On 19 March 2018 NATO started the last phase of its move to the new headquarters – a home for our modern and adaptable Alliance. This process is expected to take 12 weeks and end in mid-June.

Designed to resemble interlocking fingers, the new headquarters symbolizes NATO’s unity and cooperation. With more than 254,000 m² of space, the new headquarters accommodates around 4,000 people. It brings into one workspace the diplomatic and military delegations from 29 Allied nations, together with NATO civilian and military staff.

The new building will be able to accommodate NATO’s changing needs long into the future, and will also allow for further expansion if needed.

NATO has been based in its current building since 1967. Since then, the number of NATO members has almost doubled – from 15 to 29 – and many partners have opened diplomatic offices at NATO. As a result, almost one-fifth of our office space is located in temporary structures.

A green building

The new headquarters has been designed and built with the environment in mind. It will reduce energy use thanks to extensive thermal insulation, solar-glazing protection and advanced lighting systems.

The windows installed in the building allow it to take maximum advantage of natural light, reducing consumption of electricity. State-of-the-art “cogeneration” units will provide most of the electricity and heating used on site. A geo-thermal heating and cooling system will use the constant temperature beneath the surface of the ground to provide heat during the winter and to cool the building in summer. A system of rainwater collection and storage will supply 90% percent of the water needed for the bathrooms, cleaning and landscaping.



NATO leaders walk through the Agora of the new NATO Headquarters, 25 May 2017.

Site of the New Headquarters

The site of the new headquarters was the location of Belgium’s first airfield, in 1908. When German forces occupied Belgium in 1915, it became a Zeppelin hangar. During World War Two, the site was occupied again, and bombed by both German and Allied forces. During construction works on the new headquarters in 2010 and 2011, four pieces of unexploded ordnance were discovered.

Funding

The construction project is largely within the original estimate of 1.17bn euros, with some adjustments associated with the final phase of the works. The final costs will be known after the completion of the project. The budget has been under the supervision of NATO member states, who have funded the project.

Allies contributed to the project according to the principle of common funding (a cost-share formula based on a number of factors including Gross Domestic Product). In addition, each member nation covers costs for works associated with its national spaces i.e. offices used by the national delegations and military representations to NATO.



Fly-past at the new NATO Headquarters during the meeting of NATO leaders, 25 May 2017.

Facts and figures

- Gross surface area: over 254,000 m² of floor space - 80% bigger than the old headquarters
- Glass surface area: 72,000 m²
- Structure of the building: 8 long wings (168 m long and 18 m wide) and 4 short wings (76 m long and 18 m wide)
- Agora (central hallway linking all wings): 45 m wide, 245 m long, 32 m high
- Number of floors: 7 in the long wings, 4 in the short wings
- Conference rooms for official meetings: 18 (13,500 m²). Over 5,000 official meetings take place annually in NATO headquarters.

The building will accommodate:

- 1500 personnel from Allied delegations;
- 1700 international military and civilian staff;
- Around 650 staff from NATO agencies;
- An average of 500 visitors per day, peaking at 1,000 during events.

Timeline

- 1999 At the Washington Summit, the North Atlantic Council decides to replace NATO's temporary headquarters with a new, purpose-built building
- 2003 SOM+ASSAR wins an Architectural Design Competition, after proposing the concept of a building looking like "interlocking fingers"
- 2004 The North Atlantic Council asks Belgium to manage the project on NATO's behalf
- 2010 BAM Alliance is selected and awarded the construction contract, following an international call for bids managed by Belgium
- 2010 Construction works start
- May 2017 NATO and Belgium mark the hand-over of the building during a Special Meeting of NATO Heads of State and Government
- March 2018 NATO starts the main move to the new headquarters.

The move will be completed in time for the NATO Brussels summit in July, the first to be held in the new NATO Headquarters

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