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NATO Enlargement Problems Towards The East: Position Of Germany And
France

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Abstract

After the Cold War, NATO's existence and possible enlargement brought a new round of discourse among states, experts, scholars and etc. Almost 3 decades later, NATO became larger almost 2.5 times. Countries with Soviet past, like Baltic states, appeared under the NATO umbrella. At the same time, two other post-Soviet states, Georgia and Ukraine, want to become a NATO member and enjoy Alliance protection and Article 5. But the path to membership is complicated for these countries: in one hand, both have territorial conflicts with Russia and Russia considers them as his "near abroad" and tries to prevent their possible membership, because it is a threat to its security. On the other hand, NATO member states position towards Georgia and Ukraine is contradictory. Two leading nations in Europe - Germany and France, every time block Georgia and Ukraine in NATO. This paper analyzes the NATO enlargement problems towards the East and the factors, which influence Franco-German negative position.

"Enlargement and Integration Capacity" framework is used as a theoretical framework. The framework, which is developed by Schimmelfennig focuses on EU enlargement capacity, both internal (EU itself) and external (aspirant countries). This is relevant also for NATO enlargement process as similar factors turn out here as supporting (country's democratization level, inhabitants' willingness to defend mutually shared values and their support for the country's membership and etc.) or hindering (veto players).

This study pays in-depth attention also to Georgian and Ukrainian perceptions, their level of preparation for membership, political and military preparedness. The paper provides analysis of NATO-Russian, Russia-France and Russia-Germany relations and visions.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANP Annual National Programme

BALTSEA Baltic Security Assistance group

EU European Union

ESDI European Security and Defense Identity

ESDP European Security and Defense Policy

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NACC North Atlantic Cooperation Council

EAPC Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council

PfP Partnership for Peace

KFOR Kosovo Force

IPAP Individual Partnership Action Plan

SNGP Substantial NATO-Georgia Package

MAP Membership Action Plan

NUC NATO-Ukraine Commission

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Introduction

Statement of Problem

After the Cold War, NATO's (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) existence and possible enlargement brought a new round of discourse among states, organizations, experts, scholars and etc. Almost 3 decades later, NATO became larger almost 2.5 times. Countries with Soviet past, like Baltic states, appeared under the NATO umbrella. At the same time, two other post-Soviet states, Georgia and Ukraine, want to become a NATO member and enjoy Alliance protection and Article 5. But the path to membership is complicated for these countries: in one hand, both have territorial conflicts with Russia and Russia considers them as his "near abroad" and tries to prevent their possible membership, because it is a threat to its security. On the other hand, NATO member states position towards Georgia and Ukraine is contradictory. Two leading nations in Europe - Germany and France, every time block Georgia and Ukraine in NATO, though bilaterally they have good relations with these states. Thus, the position of Germany and France in NATO and their vision of NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia is not entirely researched. In addition, there are a few attempts to research this topic in the context of historical problems of Germany and France with one of leading player in NATO - the US. Both countries had problems with the US hegemonic behavior and used their "veto" right to block whatever is considered against their national interests. That is why this topic is important to study. It can help to shed a light on understanding Germany and France's objective and subjective reasons for blocking policy.

At the beginning of the 1990's some theorists of international relations, especially representatives of the neorealist school of thought, argued that the original threat disappearance undermined the rationale for the existence of the alliance. Two neorealist theorists Kenneth N. Waltz and John J. Mearsheimer expressed their opinion that, "without an external enemy (i.e., the Soviet Union) the Alliance would lose its reason for existence." Waltz once stated "it is the Soviet threat that provides the glue that holds NATO together. Take away that offensive threat and the United States is likely to abandon the Continent." This is why many expected the organization to "wither away or, at best, to stagnate and decline in importance." It is apparent that these neorealist predictions have not become a reality, and the Alliance has not collapsed. Moreover, it started to become larger with new members from post-Soviet countries and new partners from all over the world. The new round of the NATO enlargement policy has started since Bill Clinton's administration. It is Bill Clinton and his team who put an enlargement question on table, mentioning that "NATO enlargement is no longer whether, but rather when and whom"¹.

¹ Robert W. Rauchhaus, Explaining NATO Enlargement , 2001, page 5

Expansion issue was not accepted with enthusiasm by several European countries, such as Germany, France, Britain, Belgium and etc. In particular, Germany and France have an emphasized denial policy towards NATO enlargement in Europe. Both countries have their vision of membership and security issues. These two leading nations in Europe historically have problems with the United States and therefore with US initiative to enlarge NATO. They think that this policy is a tool to extend America's grip on European foreign and military policies. Time to time these problems have become confrontation in several aspects. It has been already 4 waves of NATO enlargement and in many cases France and Germany had and continue to have negative position towards taking new members. This policy was strong especially towards Baltic states membership process and now it is on the process for NATO's enlargement towards the East, particularly towards Georgian and Ukrainian efforts for future membership. Position of Paris and Berlin has a huge impact on these countries membership process, though bilateral cooperation of Georgia with Germany and France is on high level. The improvement of this can be 2 agreements of Georgia and French companies on strengthening Georgia's Air Defence capacities. In some ways, it is worth to mention that France and Germany are more prone to neorealist theory, which underline, that NATO enlargement can damage relations of Russia and the West. Thus, after the Cold war these two countries try to not antagonize Russia, especially in his borders.

Aim and objectives

The aim of this thesis is to research and find out the linkage between NATO enlargement problems towards the East and German-French positions on that issue.

As a theoretical framework, I am going to use not a traditional IR theory, but "Enlargement and Integration Capacity" framework, which is introduced and developed by a Professor of European politics Frank Schimmelfennig, whose main research interests are in the theory of European integration, in particular, EU enlargement. Thus, I am going to use this framework for analysis and to adjust it to my thesis. The framework, which is developed by Schimmelfennig focuses on EU enlargement capacity, both internal (EU itself) and external (aspirant countries). My thesis is related to NATO enlargement and that is closely related to EU enlargement. So similar factors turn out here as supporting (country's democratization level, inhabitants' willingness to defend mutually shared values and their support for the country's membership and etc.) or hindering (veto players). In my opinion, this framework can be relevant in this context and as Schimmelfennig mentions "theoretical pluralism is the best venue". Hence, the paper will attempt to answer the following question:

Which factors influence German and French blocking positions towards NATO enlargement of Ukraine and Georgia?

- *Why Germany and France block Ukraine and Georgia in NATO enlargement summits? No for what?*
- *Why good bilateral cooperation does not matter in the framework of NATO membership?*

In order to respond to the above mentioned question, several objectives are identified:

- Analyze NATO enlargement problems after the Cold War and German-French reasons to block the process.
- Study Germany's and France's foreign policies towards post-Soviet states
- Investigate, which factors influence NATO enlargement stagnation and what chances Kiev and Tbilisi have for NATO membership
- Explore Russia's factor and role in this process and suggest that in the case of Tbilisi and Kiev Russia's factor is the heaviest.

Research hypothesis

Based on the research there are two hypothesis that the study will attempt to verify:

- **German and French blocking policy towards Ukraine and Georgia is mainly influenced by Russia and their cooperation.**
- **German and French national interests shape their policy towards NATO's further enlargement as well.**

From aforementioned hypothesis it is clear, that German and French positions are independent variables, as they have impact on membership process. It means that their attitude towards the enlargement is influential. Dependent variable in this case, can be Georgian and Ukrainian prospective for Membership Action Plan (MAP). But it will be worth to mention that in this thesis there is also control variable, which can be Baltic states, Poland and the US. Control variable is the variable that may affect the outcome. In this context, these countries may have a specific effect on the outcome.

Methods, Data Sampling and Collection, Data Analysis

The study will focus on the 28 year period between 1990-2018. There are 3 major reasons that make a condition of the following reasons. First of all, the end of the Cold war brings new situation in international arena and gives an opportunity to frame foreign and military policies under new circumstances. Second, in this period NATO's 4 enlargement waves took place, where almost 2 dozens of states became NATO members. And finally, during this period several countries work hard to get membership under changing geopolitical situation.

The research is an attempt of an in-depth study of NATO enlargement problems and German-French position. Due to the nature of the topic critical discourse analysis will be the most relevant methodological approach to study this issue. The research will study German and France position on naming their attitude as a veto players. It will explore also the arguments, which are provided to prove these countries position. In the framework of the critical discourse analysis will be introduced Russian discourse for Georgia and Ukraine, how these countries possible membership can interrupt Russia's plans in the region.

It should be noted that the research is primarily qualitative in nature and will be based on secondary analysis as well, which implies the use of existing data. Another method that will be used is documentary analysis.

Literature review:

Asmus, Ronald D. 2002. Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era. New York: Columbia University Press. Asmus work is valuable because of his access to State Department archives, which remains off-limits for other researchers. He tells the story of how US, in particular Clinton Administration, remade NATO. Asmus work is valuable also for his revelations, like Clinton and Yeltsin arrangement on NATO enlargement timing. Asmus provides details that can be found nowhere else. And as Thomas S. Mowle mentions in one of his reviews "No understanding of NATO enlargement will be complete without Asmus— but no understanding will be complete if one only relies on Asmus".

Robert E. Hunter The European Security and Defense Policy , RAND 2002 The author provides professional analysis of the European Security and Defense Policy. This book gives an essential background for understanding how security issues as between NATO and the European Union are being posed for the early part of the 21st century. Or, in other words, ESDP is NATO's companion or a competitor? This work is interesting for further study of US - European Union relations especially in the security field.

Goldgeier, James M. 1999. "The U.S. Decision to Enlarge. How, When, Why, and What Next." The Brookings Review, N. 3, 18–21

The author provides information about the expansion of NATO into Central Europe and that the enlargement was not accepted with enthusiasm. Moreover, several experts and states stated negatively towards US decision to enlarge. This article is important for providing details about the aspiration of Baltic states for NATO membership and Clinton Administration's support in their way. In general, this article is about the Clinton Administration period and NATO's enlargement process and steps.

Stephen Larrabee, NATO's Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era Copyright Date: 2003, RAND

This book is mainly about NATO's transformation and new approach to the East. How US started to focus on European countries. For the thesis the most relevant chapter is number three, which focuses on Baltic Security. The author provides good analysis of US-Baltic states cooperation, support for membership, mentioning that support for Baltic membership in NATO was much weaker in Europe. Regarding to European attitude and policy towards Baltic states membership it was a hard and long path. Larrabee talks about German and British negative position, which slowly changed, France support and etc.

Germany's Security Policy Towards East Central Europe VLADIMÍR HANDL, KERRY LONGHURST and MARCIN ZABOROWSKI

This is a good article for understanding how Germany's Security policy changed towards East Central Europe. Authors analyze how Germany's security policy changed especially in the light of NATO enlargement. The study is interesting for thesis, because it covers Germany's attitude towards NATO expansion explaining the role of Russia in that issue.

Benjamin Schreer, A New "Pragmatism": Germany's NATO Policy, *International Journal*, Vol. 64, No. 2, NATO at 60 (Spring, 2009), pp. 383-398

This article is about Germany's opposition in NATO and negative position towards membership of Georgia and Ukraine. The author underlines the core problems, which effects US-Germany cooperation in NATO. Schreer mentions that "to some allies, Germany has even become "the new France," eroding NATO and aiming to build a counterweight to the US -led transatlantic pillar. The author explains that Germany's behaviour during NATO's Bucharest Summit towards Georgia and Ukraine is strong confrontation with US. According to the author of article the German policy goal of maintaining good relations with Russia has also characterized its dealings in NATO-Russia issues. Even during Georgian-Russian crisis in 2008, German diplomacy in NATO lobbied to keep the dialogue with Moscow open. From the authors point of view seen from Berlin, maintaining stable relations with Moscow is a priority, given the geostrategic setting and the high dependence on Russia oil and gas.

IIVI ZÁJEDOVÁ, The Baltic States' Security and NATO Enlargement, *Perspectives*, No. 13, SPECIAL ISSUE: The Balkans, NATO and European Security after the Kosovo War (Winter 1999/2000), pp. 79-90

The article is about how after the re-independence in 1991 the policy priority of Baltic states became integration into European institutions and NATO. The author explains Baltic states security problems, defence cooperation among themselves. Also she highlights the mixed messages from NATO members for membership and Russian factor.

Mark Kramer, NATO, the Baltic States and Russia: A Framework for Sustainable Enlargement, International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 78, No.4 (Oct., 2002), pp. 731-756

This article explores the implications of Baltic membership in NATO, the factors that have guided the alliance's decisions, and the prospects for NATO's relationship with Russia after the Prague summit. It provides brief overview of Russian policy towards the Baltic states, explaining why the Baltic governments started to look to NATO as a counterweight. The author in this article considers also the political and military qualifications of the Baltic states, changes in Russian policy to NATO enlargement, and the impact of Baltic membership on the alliance itself.

Eunika Katarzyna Frydrych, The Debate on NATO Expansion, Connections, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Fall 2008), pp. 1-42

This is an important article, which focuses on NATO expansion issue. It is a good study about NATO enlargement and different approaches on that issue. It is valuable for the thesis as it covers also such questions, like future membership of Georgia and Ukraine and the main problems regarding it. The author focuses on Germany and France's position towards mentioned countries membership and their reasons. The article also focuses on Russia's role, though it is not a member of the organization and holds no veto over the decisions of the Alliance.

Igor Zevelev, NATO's Enlargement and Russian Perceptions of Eurasian Political Frontiers

This is an important article, because it is mainly focuses on Russian fears towards NATO expansion in the light of NATO's growing cooperation with former Soviet republics. The Russian author attempts to explain the historical background for Russia's concerns, mentioning that Russian approach of NATO enlargement issue is mainly influenced by realist theory. The period of the study is the interval between NATO's first and second expansion rounds. The author provides official announcements from Russian and NATO/ US sides towards enlargement, statements about Baltic states or Ukraine's possible membership and Russia's response to it. It is worth to include in literature, as it shows Russian perspective and is a other side of researching topic.

Andrew Radin, Clinton Bruce Reach, Russian Views of the International Order, RAND, 2017

The researchers analyze Russian views of the international order, identifying core Russian foreign policy interests, including defense of the regime, influence in its neighborhood, and status as a great power. They focus on growing Russian skepticism of the West and to Russia's current view that the international order is dominated by the United States, which is a threat to Russian interests and security. For thesis the most relevant part is a chapter 5, where authors discuss Russian attitude towards Georgia and Ukraine and its influence in "near abroad".

James Greene, Russian Responses to NATO and EU Enlargement and Outreach, Chatham House, 2012

This article is about Russian Responses to NATO and EU enlargement process. The author focuses on those measures, which are used to maintain Russian influence in Post-Soviet space. Thus, Greene explains all forms of both maintaining and gaining influence. The article provides also information about the campaign, which helps to block the integration of CIS countries with the West. To do so, the author suggests 3 principal objectives: Ensuring the failure of democratic experiments in Ukraine and Georgia, blocking progress towards NATO and EU integration, re-establishing the predominance of Russian influence and societal models in the region. This is a valuable source, as it covers another aspect of researched topic.

Stephen J. Blank, NATO ENLARGEMENT AND THE BALTIC STATES: WHAT CAN THE GREAT POWERS DO?, 1997

This article is worth to study, as it provides detail information and analysis on Baltic states NATO membership process. There is a comprehensive knowledge of topic from different aspects. All engaged actors their visions of the issue are presented. This article covers Germany's role in Baltic states membership process and its negative position on that issue, German-Russian relation and Germany's efforts to bring Russia and NATO closer. It also gives proper understanding about US support to Baltic states.

Zdeněk Kříž, NATO after the End of the Cold War, 2015

This book provides wide range of information and analysis about NATO's role after the Cold war, it's new security tasks and relations with Russia. The author gives a brief history of NATO transformation in the period of Bill Clinton Administration, then he focuses on enlargement problems, especially on Russian fears about Baltic states membership, which viewed as a threat for the Russian forces, because of Kaliningrad and also weaker control over the transport routes for Russian energetic resources. The book explores also European countries attitude towards enlargement, in particular, Germany and France's strong opposition at the 2008 NATO Bucharest summit. Another chapter is dedicated to Russian-NATO relations and their prospects of further cooperation.

Dr Adrian Hyde-Price, NATO and the Baltic Sea Region: Towards Regional Security Governance?

This report is a study about the role of the NATO alliance in developing new forms of security governance in Post-Cold War Europe, focusing on the Baltic Sea region. It gives information about US and NATO engagement in Baltic Sea region, though mentioning that "the larger NATO becomes, the more problematic it becomes to reach consensus on key issues". The report explores

also Baltic states efforts to become a NATO member and what key issues can be essential for reaching open door policy.

Pichler, Lothar. Comparison of the French and German approaches to ESDP and NATO, 2004

This thesis provides a good comparison of French and German approaches to European security issues and NATO enlargement process. It gives a proper understanding of France and Germany's historical problems with US, Iraq crisis and confrontation between allies. There is a good analysis of French position towards NATO enlargement and ambitions in creating their own foreign and military planning block in Europe. Also it covers French vision about US hegemony and NATO's further actions. This work gives a historical background, which is necessary for this thesis.

MARCEL H. VAN HERPEN, SARKOZY, FRANCE, AND NATO, 2008

This article is about Franco-American relationship, which was historically problematic. It starts from French president Chirac, who was considered one of the main obstacles for the normalization of relationship between America and France, as he openly attacked the unipolar world. Chirac argues, that it was a time to have a multipolar world, where France would have his place. Then it continues with Sarkozy's view of NATO, which openly argues that NATO is and should remain a transatlantic organization, that primarily deals with the security interests of Europe. So NATO should not be a global power. The author studies also French vision of membership issue, which mainly influenced by its own national interests. According to that, he mentions, that France is reluctant to take in new countries, such as Georgia and Ukraine. Van Herpen analyzes also French vision of crisis management, according to which it is more a role for the UN and for the EU and not for NATO. It is not a right to mix civil and military operations.

Robert W. Rauchhaus, Explaining NATO Enlargement , 2001

This is collective book of different articles about NATO enlargement from different perspectives. The book provides analysis of NATO expansion, national interest and etc. Rauchhaus in his first article discusses that future rounds of enlargement will require NATO to make some difficult choices considering Russian factor. He also analyzes Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic's path to NATO membership, also Clinton's statement that "NATO enlargement is no longer whether, but rather when and whom". This is the main difficulty: whom invite the next?

Judy Dempsey, FROM SUEZ TO SYRIA Why NATO Must Strengthen Its Political Role, 2016

The author analyzes the possibilities of NATO to gain more political role after Brexit, NATO-Russian problems, NATO's role in other parts of the world, like Asia, enlargement question and etc. As for expansion question, the author particularly mentions German and French roles in that issue. "Germany and France with other countries hiding behind them- argue that now is not the

time to antagonize Russia by admitting these countries". This is important for the thesis, because it is additional source, which proves that these countries do not want any confrontation with France.

ANDREW T. WOLFF, The future of NATO enlargement after the Ukraine crisis, International Affairs, Volume 91, Issue 5, 2015

This article analyzes the history of NATO—Russian tensions on enlargement process, considers how NATO's enlargement policy factored into the Ukraine crisis, explores options for the future of enlargement. There is also an analysis of Russia's persistent hostility towards NATO's policy of eastward expansion. The author touches also Crimea's problem, mentioning opinions from both side. According to Russia it was response to NATO enlargement, from NATO's point of view eastern enlargement is not a cause of the Ukraine crisis, and that enlargement does not threaten Russia, it just creates stability for all of Europe. This article is valuable as discusses the future of NATO enlargement process after the Ukraine crisis, which is a decisive factor for membership.

Outline of the Study

The research is divided into four chapters. The first **chapter is about NATO enlargement history**, how NATO has changed after Cold War: The role of USA and criticism towards his address ,confrontation of France, Germany and US: National interest matters and the case of the Baltic states. **2 chapter is about NATO and Eurasia, case of Ukraine and Georgia**, NATO policy towards post-Soviet countries, NATO open door policy for Ukraine and Georgia: Bucharest summit, NATO and Ukraine: changes after crisis in Ukraine, NATO and Georgia: high level of cooperation and obstacles. **3 chapter is about position of Berlin and Paris towards NATO membership of Ukraine and Georgia**, France and German foreign policies towards post-Soviet countries, Blocking policy of Germany and France towards Ukraine and Georgia in NATO enlargement summits. **4 chapter is Russia-NATO relations in the light of enlargement process**, Russian-NATO official relations from the perspective of US-Russian confrontation (the last National security strategy of US, Russia is the main treat), Russia-Germany and Russia-France bilateral cooperation out of NATO (political and economic issues). Another part is the theoretical explanation and conclusion

Research limitations

For more comprehensive thesis I do not have access to German and French officials and experts for in-depth interviews.

Chapter 1:NATO enlargement history

1.1 NATO's brief history after 70 years of existence: The most attractive military alliance for countries

NATO as a classic example of an alliance was launched by Western countries to ensure the security of its member states, which in practice meant deterring the threat posed by the Soviet Union and the states affiliated with it in the Warsaw Pact. It is a multilateral alliance based on a formal agreement—the Washington Treaty (1949)—that provides security guarantees for each member state. In addition, it has been a defensive alliance that aims at maintaining the sovereignty and freedom of its members. However, what distinguishes NATO from alliances of the past is its subordination to the United Nations Charter.²

It is almost 70 years since the foundation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and this organization still is the most popular among countries, who desire to be part of it. After the formulation new member states have increased from the original 12 to 29. 4 countries now are considered as aspiring members, 21 countries participate in NATO's Partnership for Peace program, 15 other countries involved in institutionalized dialogue programs.

As Ronald D. Asmus argues, there were three main goals of the expansion of NATO to ten post-communist countries: to build a post-Cold War Europe “whole, free, and at peace”; to renew the transatlantic alliance; and to reposition the United States and Europe to address global challenges.³

In general, NATO was created against the Soviet threat. And when the USSR collapsed there was a question: why should NATO exist? Another issue was the format and the purpose of the Alliance existence and then only enlargement.

NATO enlargement history divided into 4 main stages: First wave of Post-Cold war membership in 1999, the biggest wave in NATO enlargement history in 2004, then in 2009 and 2017. According to NATO official website, provision for enlargement is given by Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which states that membership is open to any “European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area”. Any decision to invite a country to join the Alliance is taken by the North Atlantic Council, NATO's principal political decision-making body, on the basis of consensus among all Allies.⁴ NATO itself after the collapse of the Soviet Union, was forced to remake its image in Eastern Europe developing a new cooperative relationship with Russia and its former allies. Thus, the Atlantic Alliance launched a series of cooperative initiatives (NACC, EAPC, Partnership for Peace

² Richard H. Heindel, Thorsten V. Kalijarvi, and Francis O. Wilcox, “The North Atlantic Treaty in the United States Senate,” *The American Journal of International Law* 43, 1949

³ Ronald D. Asmus, “Europe's Eastern Promise: Rethinking NATO and EU Enlargement,” *Foreign Affairs* 87:1 (2008): 95, Eunika Katarzyna Frydrych, *The Debate on NATO Expansion*, page 18

⁴ Member countries, *Nato.int* [online] https://www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/topics_52044.htm

(PfP) etc...) But there are at least, two different sets of partner countries: those interested in becoming full members of NATO, and those interested in maintaining some kind of cooperation with the Atlantic Alliance rather than in membership.

1.2 How NATO has changed after Cold War: The role of USA and criticism towards his address

It is said that the main advocate of NATO enlargement was the administration of USA president Bill Clinton, who was inaugurated in 1993. Though Senate Republicans believed that they—not Bill Clinton—had been the engine driving enlargement. Republicans had written enlargement into the Contract with America in 1994. They had driven the legislative process from 1994 to 1996.⁵ Indeed, president administration had a huge support of figures, such as James Goldgeier, Anthony Lake, Richard Holbrooke and Madeleine Albright. Before Bill Clinton, the idea of NATO enlargement had little support within the American administration. "A major role in promoting the idea was played by Anthony Lake especially. The main resistance in the USA against the enlargement of the North Atlantic Alliance, supported mainly by military-strategic and geopolitical arguments, came from the military spheres, especially from the Ministry of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff".⁶

Many experts note that the process of NATO enlargement initially got criticism both in the academic and political sphere. In that period, the dean of America's Russia experts, George F. Kennan, had called the expansion of NATO into Central Europe "the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-Cold War era." "Kennan, the architect of America's post-World War II strategy of containment of the Soviet Union, believed, as did most other Russia experts in the United States, that expanding NATO would damage beyond repair U.S. efforts to transform Russia from enemy to partner".⁷

John Lewis Gaddis criticized the Clinton administration, mentioning that NATO enlargement could antagonize Russia and boost anti-Western forces in Russian society. (Gaddis 1998: 28) There were also many collective actions against NATO enlargement. In June 1997, an open letter written by fifty US security experts, officials and politicians across the whole political spectrum was published labeling NATO enlargement "a policy error of historic importance." In their opinion, NATO enlargement would decrease Russian readiness to cooperate with the West, draw

⁵ Goldgeier, James M. "The U.S. Decision to Enlarge. How, When, Why, and What Next." The Brookings Review, N.3, 1999, page 21

⁶ Zdeněk Kříž, NATO after the End of the Cold War, 2015, page

⁷ Goldgeier, James M. "The U.S. Decision to Enlarge. How, When, Why, and What Next." The Brookings Review, N.3, 1999, page 18

new dividing lines in Europe, degrade NATO's ability to provide Article 5 guarantees, involve the USA in unsettled disputes across Central and Eastern Europe".⁸

It is worth to mention, that though existing fear that enlargement could damage growing new relations with Russia, Ronald Asmus in his work brings revelation that Presidents of United States and Russia Clinton and Yeltsin had an agreement on the timing of NATO enlargement. According to him, Clinton wanted to be able to advocate enlargement during his reelection campaign, so to increase his appeal among Americans of Eastern European descent. In his turn, Yeltsin wanted enlargement to be taken from the table while he focused on his own re-election. Asmus reveals, that Clinton agreed not to publicly endorse NATO enlargement until August 1996, after his Russian counterpart was safely returned to office.⁹ Once President Clinton suggested that NATO had successfully transcended the Cold War and was an alliance that was renovating itself, "directed no longer against a hostile block of nations, but instead designed to advance the security of every democracy in Europe – NATO's old members, new members and non- members alike"¹⁰ (White House, 1997, 6 Daniel Braun, page 7).

The Russian attitude towards NATO enlargement in the early 1990s was by no means a categorical denial. Boris Yeltsin claimed in 1993 that expanding the Alliance to Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia did not contravene Russian interests. (Vykoukal 2003: 222) However, in the middle of the 1990s Russian negative attitude to NATO enlargement was very strong.

And as regards to the changes of NATO concepts, it is necessary to note that NATO Strategic Concepts has been the core document that defines NATO's role in security issues. After the end of the Cold War, NATO adopted three strategic concepts, namely in 1991, 1999 and 2010. Regarding the procedures of their adoption and content, these strategies are very different from those in the Cold War. First, contrary to during the Cold War, NATO strategies are not classified. Second, post-Cold War strategies were approved by the NAC (North Atlantic Council) and not by the Military Committee. Third, while Cold War strategies used to concentrate on the military sector of security, nowadays NATO strategies pay much more attention to other security sectors.¹¹ Nevertheless, the fundamental NATO tasks remain unchanged – to safeguard freedom and security for all members using political and military means in accordance with the UN Charter.

In the 1991 NATO Strategic Concept NATO declared its commitment to pursue dialogue and cooperation with the Soviet Union and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The Alliance committed itself to creating a security environment based on the growth of democratic institutions

⁸ Zdeněk Kříž, NATO after the End of the Cold War, 2015, page 26

⁹ Thomas S. Mowle, Review for "Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade itself for a New Era by Ronald D. Asmus, American Studies International Vol. 41, No. 3 (OCTOBER 2003), pp. 136-137

¹⁰ Daniel Braun, page 7

¹¹ Zdeněk Kříž, NATO after the End of the Cold War A Brief History, 2015, page 8

and peaceful conflict settlement. NATO assumed also an active role in crisis management and conflict prevention.

The 1999 NATO Strategic Concept defined that the collective defense was of primary importance. NATO's traditional tasks and goals were not changed. The only exception was its renouncement of the need to create a counterbalance against the Soviet Union due to the fact that, as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, NATO no longer had a comparable powerful adversary. (Venturoni 1999: 8–9) In the 2010 Strategic Concept, NATO reaffirmed as its main goals and tasks its commitment to collective defense and consultation on member states' security problems. The Central and Eastern European member states especially opposed the idea of refocusing NATO from collective defence. Poland paid great attention to traditional NATO tasks. (Winid 2009) The Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexandr Vondra supported the idea that Article 5 had to remain the core of NATO. (Vondra 2010) A very similar attitude was adopted by Hungary and Bulgaria. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hungary, Obretenova, Radio Bulgaria) The Baltic States also advocated collective defence as the main NATO function. (Baltic Defence College Faculty 2009) Norway also took up a very similar stance. (Norwegian Ministry of Defence 2009: 34) (page 10, Zdeněk Kříž, NATO after the End of the Cold War A Brief History, 2015)

1.3 Confrontation of France, Germany and US: National interest matters

From the early days of the European Movement, the countries that later formed the European Union have had the ambition of one day creating their own foreign policy and their own defense and military institutions. They wanted to be sure that the tragic events of World Wars I and II would not be repeated. Early efforts to create a European military organization introduced twin themes that have been present in debate and developments ever since: on the one hand, the desire of European states to move integration forward, including a defense element (and, concomitantly, arrangements for making possible a “European” foreign policy); and, on the other hand, a recognition that, for many purposes, U.S. strategic commitment, military power, and the preeminence of a U.S.-led alliance have been indispensable.¹²

The end of the cold war brought a new round of discussion and decisions among the European Union countries regarding foreign policy and defense institutional arrangements, as well as a significant change in the U.S. perspective. After 1990, the European security environment changed substantially. US decided to withdraw its troops from Europe. The large numbers of NATO troops to guarantee Europe's freedom against a nuclear and conventional Soviet menace

¹² Robert E. Hunter The European Security and Defense Policy , RAND 2002, page 8

were no longer seen as necessary. The European NATO members came into a position that they could establish European security without the support of the United States. Regarding to this issue, Anand Menon mentions that "US cannot both leave and ask Europeans not to have a defense of their own. If the Americans were going to contribute less, Europe needed to develop its own capabilities".¹³

What was already mentioned 1986 in the Single European Act as momentum toward the development of a collective European defense, took greater shape in December 1991 at the Maastricht meeting. The European Union agreed on "the long-term perspective of a common defense policy within the European Union, which might in time lead to a common defense. The issue of the West European Union was addressed as a possible defense component of the EU. NATO recognized the development of greater European responsibility regarding security and defense and adopted its political and military structures to reflect the emerging European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI).

In this case interesting role had European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), which was considered as a competitor and a supportive instrument for NATO. The problem was that, that two European leading countries, such as Germany and France had a different approach towards US and its leadership in Europe. Both countries have tried to have a big role in drawing European security architecture than US. Thus, the relation of ESDP to NATO was strongly affected by the national interests of France and Germany. The development of ESDP as either a competitor or supporter of NATO depended on whether the French or the German approach to European security becomes dominant.

In April 2003, France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg proposed to establish separate European military planning capabilities which led critics to question the solidarity among NATO members. France and Germany supported this proposal to strengthen ESDP, although this step could easily be interpreted as competitive with NATO's European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI).¹⁴ (Comparison of French and German position of NATO, summary)

The reason for France and Germany to develop European capabilities regarding security beyond NATO's framework of ESDI has different historical roots. Analysis of the historical evolution of security policy in France and Germany shows the vast differences in each nation's objectives. First of all, the post WWII experience of France helped to create a security policy, which emphasizes French sovereignty and claim to leadership in Europe, independent military capabilities for the European Union and a separation from US domination in European security issues. In June 1997,

¹³ Anand Menon, " France, NATO and the Limits of Independence", New York: MACMILLIAN Press INC., 2000, p. 123.

¹⁴ Comparison of French and German position of NATO, summary)

NATO clarified its approval regarding the availability of NATO resources to EU-led operations. After which, France thought it is a good chance to regain French influence in European security issues. Though following events show that French aspirations had 3 main challenges. First of all, the Balkan crisis made it clear that there is a huge gap between the military capabilities of the EU and of NATO with its US resources. All members of the EU, including France, had to recognize that the EU was not able to control this regional conflict without the support of the US. Second, NATO showed its capability to adapt to any new situation. NATO started to pay more attention to Articles. For instance, Article 10 of the Washington treaty, the admission of new member states, played a major role in NATO adoption to the new challenges. NATO's invitation to the Eastern European countries led to a confirmation of NATO's role as guarantor of European security. Eastern Europe was more interested in NATO's security umbrella than relying on the EU's plans to assure European defense. That's why Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic joined EU members Britain, Spain, Italy, Denmark and Portugal in signing a letter in January 2003 to support Washington's stance on Iraq. The French reaction was remarkable, President Jacques Chirac called the letters "infantile" and "dangerous," adding: "They missed a great opportunity to keep quiet."¹⁵ Third, France's absence of NATO's integrated military structure prevented France from influencing NATO's new adjustments.

Regarding Germany's foreign policy, it is worth to mention, that country's strong reaction to preventing future conflict, yet the focus and execution are quite different. Germany wanted to be part of multilevel security organizations, had equal cooperation with European partners and NATO, while accepting more international responsibility.

In the context of the European unification process and the development of EU's ESDP, the discord within the alliance raised the question, whether or not NATO still formed the primary organization of mutual defense and community of shared values or was the European Pillar of NATO via the ESDP not only "separable" but indeed "separate." The development of the ESDP could be the greatest challenge to the future of NATO, as it could become a tool to duplicate NATO capabilities. But today, there is nothing to worry about, as NATO is the only security providing alliance in both sides of Atlantic.

The analysis of this historical events shows that nowadays relations between NATO and especially between US and France, US and Germany have their impact on future enlargement of Alliance. Moreover, it is the US who mainly support and supported countries in their path to NATO enlargement. And France and Germany are the main states who time to time oppose to US.

¹⁵ BBC News,[online] New Europe' backs EU on Iraq, (19 February 2003); available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2775579.stm>

Another bone in US-German-French relationship was an opposition during Iraq war in early 2003. The European NATO members France and Germany opposed the US strategy of preemptive force against the Iraq in the absence of a concrete mandate by the United Nation's Security Council. The fact that France, as well as Germany, interpreted the UN resolution 1441 as not including preemptive military force does not suggest that they shared a common approach to the Iraqi crisis. Germany ruled out the use of military means even before the final results of the weapons inspection were presented. France, in contrast, did not oppose the use of force, had a new UN resolution sanctioned it. Critics saw the Franco-German opposition to the US-led "coalition of the willing" as a further weakening of the European Pillar of NATO. However, this opposition was not representative of the European Union and member countries did not find consensus on the Iraq question.¹⁶

1.4 Hard path of Baltic states

Alliance enlargements in 1999 and 2004, and a strong commitment to continuing enlargement appear to signal that NATO was not just muddling through. Enlargement as energetic affirmation, with more countries eagerly seeking membership, seems to suggest that the organization has successfully adapted its identity to new conditions and has retained its relevance.¹⁷ (page 6 Daniel Braun, NATO enlargement identity)

Baltic states desire to become a NATO and EU member was a policy priority after re-independence in 1991. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania started to work hard in economic, civil, military sphere to meet the EU and NATO standards. Though their path to membership was very hard with several obstacles. Since 1991, these countries have actively worked on strengthening political, economic and social ties with the international and European organizations. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania made a good relations with their neighbour countries. There was an attempt for the normalization of relations between the Baltic States and Russia, initiator was Finland. From the Russian point of view, the Baltic States are considered to be part of two lost empires—the Russian and the Soviet.¹⁸ Russia likes to mention "near abroad" term, but as above mentioned author notes, " Moscow should realize that what it calls its 'near abroad' is also the 'near abroad' of the West". Thus, Baltic states possible membership was under strong pressure by Russia. It argued that the West should keep NATO's doors shut to them.

¹⁶ Comparison of French and German position of NATO, summary

¹⁷ (page 6 Daniel Braun, NATO enlargement identity)

¹⁸ Zajedova, Ivi., "The Baltic States' Security and NATO Enlargement, Perspectives", No. 13, SPECIAL ISSUE: The Balkans, NATO and European Security after the Kosovo War (Winter 1999/2000), page 79

In general, Baltic states faced many problems after independent as many other Post-Soviet countries. First, they need to have an army, which can meet to the NATO standards. But the military infrastructure was in ruins, modern equipment and logistical support were almost non-existent and public support for a professional military was extremely low. There existed a number of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian military men in uniform, but they had served in other countries' armed forces and received different type of trainings. So Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had to build their national defence establishments up from zero. "The pressing operational task was to secure the final withdrawal of Russian troops and to secure the state borders. Having successfully achieved the operational requirement of defining their sovereignty within secure borders, it was then possible for these three States to start the huge task of building national security and defence structures"¹⁹.

As with most other Central European states and not only, for the Baltic States NATO is seen as the main security guarantor in Europe. Their question for membership though was not in agenda in 1999 for several reasons. First, their territory was not defensible, second, they were not ready politically, economically and military prepared. Third, they have problems with their Russian minorities. And finally, there was no threat to the Baltics. At that time Russia was not considered as a main threat for the Baltic security. In other hand, among NATO members was heard mixed messages about future enlargement. Though Bill Clinton has assured that NATO's open door policy is actual. The reality is that NATO was not only US and other members opinions also should be considered. For instance, the German Chancellor Schroeder said no new nations will be invited to join NATO this year. The alliance needs a 'period of consolidation' after the admission of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.²⁰

German attitude towards Baltic states membership was negative initially. This country had its own interests and fears. First, Germany was afraid of negative impact on relations with Russia. Berlin gave top priority to the Baltic membership in the EU and to increasing regional cooperation in the Baltic area. Their EU membership would stabilize those states and create a tremendous outlet for German exports and investments. The EU's expansion would also give Germany an ever greater voice in the EU's future activities.

By 1996, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel Kohl openly opposed anything that might annoy Russia. He attacked Washington for raising the issue in an election year (as if democratic debate should be banned). He emphasized EU's (i.e., Germany's) trade with Russia as a factor leading to

¹⁹ Zajedova, Ivi., "The Baltic States' Security and NATO Enlargement, Perspectives", No. 13, SPECIAL ISSUE: The Balkans, NATO and European Security after the Kosovo War (Winter 1999/2000), page 84

²⁰ RFE, 'NATO expansion—How Far, How Fast', 12.02.99

its integration and implicitly as a factor working against the Baltics²¹. (NATO enlargement and Baltic states, page 28) By May 1996, Kinkel's public opposition to Baltic entry into NATO due to the Russian factor became clear. By January 1997, German sources hinted at a deal formally to exclude the Baltic states from membership for 5-10 years in return for Russian acceptance of NATO expansion. Kinkel again hinted at possible EU membership for Estonia alone (the strongest Baltic economy).²² (NATO enlargement and Baltic states, page 32)

However, German policy slowly began to shift in the course of 2001–2002, when it became increasingly apparent that support for Baltic membership was growing, especially in the United States. During a visit to Riga (Latvia) in February 2002, Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer formally announced German support for Baltic membership, noting that an invitation to the Baltic states to join NATO at the Prague summit would “erase the lines of injustice and division in Europe.”²³ This brought German policy firmly in line with U.S. and French policy.

France was one of the first Alliance members, who adjusted its policy. In 2001 during a visit to the Baltic states, French President Chirac announced France’s support for Baltic membership. Sensing that U.S. policy was moving toward support of Baltic membership, Chirac decided to make a virtue out of necessity and get some credit for what was clearly growing U.S. support of Baltic membership in the Alliance.²⁴

It is worth to mention, that the support for Baltic membership in NATO was much weaker in Europe than it was in the United States. The US was the only country who started to support the Baltic states from the very beginning. The United States’ role has been—and remains—critical in enhancing security in the Baltic region. The US was one of the few Western countries that never recognized the incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union. While not providing an explicit security guarantee—as the Balts initially wanted—the US committed itself in the charter to help create the conditions for eventual Baltic membership in NATO. Then along with Denmark, the US took the lead in coordinating military assistance to Baltic countries through the Baltic Security Assistance group (BALTSEA).²⁵

For the political and tactical reasons, the US administration was careful not to announce which countries would be issued invitations at the Prague NATO summit. Thus, they wanted to keep pressure on candidates to continue reforms and prevent any backsliding. It is interesting, that even in the late of 2000, many observers and members of the policy elite in Washington would not give the three Baltic states much chance of being invited to join the Alliance at the Prague

²¹ NATO enlargement and Baltic states, page 28

²² NATO enlargement and Baltic states, page 32

²³ Jamestown Monitor, Vol. 8, No. 42, February 14, 2002

²⁴ Larrabee, F. Stephen . “NATO’s Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era, Baltic security”. RAND, 2003, page 60

²⁵ Larrabee, F. Stephen . “NATO’s Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era, Baltic security”. RAND, 2003, page 55

summit. At that time, most observers expected that there would be a relatively small enlargement at Prague, which would include Slovenia and Slovakia (the so-called “Slo-Slo” option) and at most one Baltic country—and even that seemed a long shot. By the summer of 2002, however, it was widely assumed that all three Baltic states would receive invitations at Prague²⁶.

According to Stephen Larrabee, there were several reasons or factors for that decision. For the first one the author suggests Baltic states performance. "In terms of democratic consolidation and market reform the Baltic states ranked at the head of the enlargement queue, along with Slovenia". Though other experts and scholars would hardly agree with him, as many of them argue that Baltic states at that time did not meet NATO standards at all. Yes, they had progress, but it was not enough for them. The question was political. Continuing Larrabee mentions that the second factor was Russia. This country continued to oppose Baltic membership in principle but also wanted to concentrate on improving relations with NATO. As the third factor mentioned US foreign policy after September 11. "The main U.S. strategic priority became the war on terrorism. For this the United States needed as broad a coalition of allies as possible".²⁷ And finally the last factor was a growing belief that it did not make sense to invite only one Baltic state, for instance Estonia (the strongest economy among Baltic states).

However, the invitations to the Baltic states at Prague summit represent an important victory for the Baltic states. But condition after Prague changed, because it was important to ensure that NATO's Article 5 guarantee is not just a paper guarantee but is backed up by real military capabilities to defend the Baltic states in a crisis. But the key challenge in the post-Prague period therefore will be to find a strategic agenda that will maintain U.S. interest in the region, as the US was seen as the main supporter.

As mentioned afore, Russia was against Baltic state's membership. Russia unconditionally opposes their entry into NATO, calling it unacceptable. Russia's 1993 military doctrine also explicitly states that an alliance's expansion to states on its borders, e.g., the Baltic states, threatens vital Russian interests. In 1997, Russia's Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov said that the issue of the Baltic states and NATO was a condition for future East-West cooperation.

It is not a news that Post-Soviet states were and are considered by Russia as a near abroad and new partners and engagements are threat for Russian security. But there is another factor that also matters for Russia — strong economic interests.

When Baltic states started to work to get NATO membership, Russia was afraid of it and started to block all kind of steps, initiatives, because over 40 percent of Russia's oil and gas

²⁶ Larrabee, F. Stephen . "NATO's Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era, Baltic security". RAND, 2003, page 58

²⁷ Ibid page 59

exports go through Baltic ports.²⁸ The interesting part of this history is Russia's attitude towards the Baltic states membership in EU. As this country saw no problem, moreover, Baltic states membership could facilitate closer relations between Russia and the EU.

Coming back to the NATO membership process, Russia always mentioned Russian minority issue, which was a source of friction, especially between Russia and Estonia and Latvia. The minority issue was less of a problem with Lithuania because Lithuania has a relatively small Russian-speaking population. Russian authorities have used the minority issue to exert pressure on the Baltic states to achieve broader foreign policy goals. Economic interests of nonstate actors such as Gazprom and LUKoil also influenced Russian policy toward the Baltic states.²⁹

From the security approach Russia had fears for Kaliningrad—the former German city of Königsberg. Post-Prague period showed that this city became an increasingly important part of the Baltic security agenda. The region now is detached from Russia and bordered by NATO and EU members Poland and Lithuania. After the collapse of the USSR, the region was highly militarized, though later Russia reduced its troops. It was also a place of drugs, criminals and etc. After the membership these countries have been required to impose strict border and visa requirements on Kaliningrad citizens wishing to travel west or to Russia. Both countries had fears that soldiers or criminal groups would enter their countries.

"Given Germany's strong historical ties to Kaliningrad, many local officials hoped that Germany would play an active role in helping to revitalize the region. However, Germany has maintained a low profile regarding Kaliningrad. Berlin has been reluctant to become too strongly engaged economically in the region for fear of sparking Russian fears of German "revanchism" and that it intended to "reclaim" Kaliningrad at some point".³⁰

Now Kaliningrad region still an issue both for Russia and for NATO member countries. Russia tries to defend the region from NATO and its members and have fears that the region can be isolated from the Russia. The biggest fear for NATO and NATO member Lithuania and Poland is that Russia might attempt to close the "Suwalki Gap," the 60-mile-long stretch of Poland that separates Kaliningrad from Belarus — strategic ally of Russia. If Russia invaded that stretch of land, the Baltic states would be cut off from the rest of Europe. Thus, it is clear that the Baltic states membership was a headache for Russia and another problem for security. That's why Russia used its all measures to block these countries. But the history shows that these countries are now NATO members and Russia's warnings about confrontation and deterioration of relations with the West remained on the level of official announcements and statements. After a ceremonial raising

²⁸ Ibid page 70

²⁹ Ibid page 72

³⁰ Ibid page 76

of the new members' flags, Russia's foreign minister, Sergei V. Lavrov meeting with NATO ministers in Brussels, called NATO's expansion a mistake. "The presence of American soldiers on our border has created a kind of paranoia in Russia," he said, according to Agence-France Press.³¹

Hereby, the Baltic states successful case shows that geopolitical situation always matters and there is no final verdict for any state from any country. Though the Baltic states still have security problems and fears from Russia, they are NATO members and can have an impact on NATO's further enlargement, especially towards the East.

³¹ As NATO Finally Arrives on Its Border, Russia Grumbles, The New York Times [online]
<https://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/03/world/as-nato-finally-arrives-on-its-border-russia-grumbles.html>

Chapter 2: NATO and Eurasia, case of Ukraine and Georgia

2.1 NATO policy towards post-Soviet countries

In general, Western strategy toward the post-Soviet space has enjoyed substantial accord between Europe and America, and much bipartisan backing in the United States.³² It is mentioned, that the core part of the strategy has been support for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the newstates, for their integration into the global economy, and for democratic and economic reform. Both Russia and former Soviet republics are important for the West, because of their nuclear weapons and energy resources, political and social conditions and etc. 3 Post-Soviet states, such as the Baltic states now are part of NATO and EU, accordingly their cooperation and relations with NATO and the West in general are differ from other states. Two other republics, such as Georgia and Ukraine want to become members of both organizations: the EU and NATO. Therefore, the level and agenda of their cooperation with NATO and EU differs greatly from other countries. And the rest of Post-Soviet countries have their own level of cooperation.

As mentioned above, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, NATO tried to remake its image in Eastern Europe developing a new cooperative relationship with Russia and its former allies. Thus, the Atlantic Alliance launched a series of cooperative initiatives (NACC, EAPC, Partnership for Peace (PfP) etc...) But there are at least, two different sets of partner countries: those interested in becoming full members of NATO, and those interested in maintaining some kind of cooperation with the Atlantic Alliance rather than in membership. So it is worth to mention that there is no one common NATO policy towards the post-Soviet countries, because every country itself chose the level of the cooperation with the NATO. And from one country to another there is a huge difference of both NATO interests and the states interests as well.

Central Asian countries do not want to become a NATO member and cooperation depends on their interests. According to NATO website NATO continues to deepen cooperation with its partner countries in Central Asia — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. "It is part of NATO's policy to reach out to strategically important regions whose security and stability are closely linked to wider Euro-Atlantic security. Each of the five countries has the potential to positively impact the future development of Afghanistan, where the Alliance remains deeply engaged".³³

All five Central Asian partners have established diplomatic representation to NATO Headquarters in Brussels. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are represented in the Military Partnership Division at

³² William Courtney, "Western Strategy toward Russia and the Post-Soviet Space," page 1

³³

Allied Command Operations – based at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium – which facilitates the countries' participation in training and exercises. In addition, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan also have military representatives at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

NATO and Russia's relations are complicated after Crimea issue, though in the Strategic Concept for Defence and Security of the members of NATO (2010) mentioned that NATO wants to see a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia. "NATO-Russia cooperation is of strategic importance as it contributes to creating a common space of peace, stability and security. NATO poses no threat to Russia". On the other hand, several members of Alliance considers Russia as a threat to their security. For instance, the Baltic states and aspirant countries, like Georgia and Ukraine. In its turn, Russia argues that NATO enlargement is a problem for its security and borders.

Alberto Priego, PhD, University of London in his "NATO cooperation towards South Caucasus" article mentions, that "NATO's approach towards the South Caucasus is flexible and chosen by partner countries. Actually, NATO policy towards the PfP in general and towards the South Caucasus in particular could well be labelled as a form of a la carte cooperation".³⁴ Concerning the South Caucasus, any of the three Caucasian Republics can select what kind of cooperation it prefers to develop in the framework of the PfP. By the way, other post-Soviet countries can select their cooperation level, too. In the South Caucasus, 3 republics have good cooperation level, but only Georgia seeks to become a member. About Georgia's and also Ukraine's aspiration we will talk in the following subchapters. As for Azerbaijan and Armenia, NATO policy seems clear. NATO supports OSCE Minsk Group efforts for Nagorno-Karabakh conflict peaceful regulation. With both countries NATO have projects and individual programs. In this situation, in the South Caucasus and also in post-Soviet space Armenia is the only country that is a member of CSTO and has such a close partnership with NATO. For Azerbaijan, the big role has NATO's important ally Turkey, though this country does not have desire to join NATO in the near future. Thus, NATO's approach towards post-Soviet space different from country to country. But the fact that NATO wants to have a presence in post-Soviet space is obvious. Russia in its turn, tries to block NATO expansion near its borders.

2.2 NATO open door policy for Ukraine and Georgia: Bucharest summit

NATO's "open door policy" is based on Article 10 of the Alliance's founding document, which was signed in 1949. The Treaty states that NATO membership is open to any "European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area". It states also that any decision on enlargement must be made "by unanimous agreement".³⁵

Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty reflects the openness of the Alliance to new members. Following the end of the Cold War, the process was reaffirmed at the January 1994 Brussels Summit, at which NATO leaders stated that "We expect and would welcome NATO expansion that would reach to democratic states to our East."³⁶

Each sovereign country has the right to choose its own security arrangements and NATO respects their will. The fundamental principle is enshrined in international agreements, including the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe. Article 13 of the Washington Treaty specifically gives Allies the right to leave whenever they want.

The process of accession starts from the states desire. Any European country that wish to join NATO is initially invited to begin an Intensified Dialogue with the Alliance about their aspirations and related reforms. Aspirants may then be invited to join the Membership Action Plan. This is a programme which helps nations prepare for possible future membership, though participation does not guarantee membership, but is a key preparation mechanism. Another programme, which is important for the cooperation is Partnership for Peace programme (PfP). To join the Alliance, nations are expected to meet certain political, economic and military criteria, set out in the Alliance's 1995 Study on Enlargement. These criteria include a functioning democratic political system based on a market economy; fair treatment of minority populations; a commitment to resolve conflicts peacefully; an ability and willingness to make a military contribution to NATO operations; and a commitment to democratic civil-military relations and institutions.

10 years before, in April 2-4, 2008 NATO held a summit in Bucharest, Romania, where among other issues was discussed Georgian and Ukrainian request for getting NATO's Membership Action Plan. At the Bucharest Summit NATO members instead of granting desired MAP, made an unusual formulation, which states that NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. "We agreed today that these countries will

³⁵ NATO Enlargement & Open Door, Nato.int [online] https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_07/20160627_1607-factsheet-enlargement-eng.pdf

³⁶ NATO'S OPEN DOOR POLICY, Nato.int [online] <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/1999/9904-wsh/pres-eng/04open.pdf>

become members of NATO. Both nations have made valuable contributions to Alliance operations. We welcome the democratic reforms in Ukraine and Georgia and look forward to free and fair parliamentary elections in Georgia in May. MAP is the next step for Ukraine and Georgia on their direct way to membership. Today we make clear that we support these countries' applications for MAP. Therefore we will now begin a period of intensive engagement with both at a high political level to address the questions still outstanding pertaining to their MAP applications".³⁷ (Bucharest summit declaration

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm) NATO Foreign Ministers were asked to make a first assessment of progress at their December 2008 meeting.

The allies apparently wished to signal their confidence in the ability of the two countries' governments to make the necessary reforms to qualify for membership. The statement was also an obvious message to Moscow that it may not determine which governments enter NATO. The allies did not provide a time frame for eventual membership.³⁸

The main problem and opposition for granting MAP to above mentioned countries came from Germany and France. Several sources mentions though, that there were also other countries hiding behind them. It is worth to mention, that the U.S. Administration reportedly supported offering a MAP to Georgia at the 2008 NATO Summit. Moreover, on February 14, 2008, the Senate approved S.Res. 439 (sponsored by Senator Lugar), which urges NATO to award a MAP to Georgia and Ukraine as soon as possible.³⁹

Germany and France, and also other members stated that they opposed Georgia's and Ukraine's entry into the MAP at that time arguing that it was not a time to antagonize Russia by admitting these countries.⁴⁰ According to CRS Report for Congress, 2008, "a majority of Ukraine's population opposes NATO membership; some allies believe that Kiev must persuade its population of the value of membership before the MAP process can begin. Some allies also believe that Georgia must first stage its parliamentary elections in May and achieve acceptable international standards, and that it must make progress on resolving its two "frozen" conflicts within its territory". Thus, in Bucharest NATO once again stated that NATO's open door policy remains open for countries, but it is unclear when Georgia and Ukraine will get an opportunity to "enter that door".

³⁷ NATO Bucharest summit declaration, Nato.int [online]

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm

³⁸ CRS report for Congress, The NATO Summit at Bucharest, 2008 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS22847.pdf>

³⁹ CRS report for Congress, Enlargement Issues at NATO's Bucharest Summit , 2008 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34415.pdf>

⁴⁰ Dempsey, Judy. "FROM SUEZ TO SYRIA: Why NATO Must Strengthen Its Political Role", 2016, page 26

2.3 NATO and Ukraine: changes after the crisis in Ukraine

Dialogue and cooperation between NATO and Ukraine started after the end of the Cold War, when the country joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in 1991 and the Partnership for Peace programme in 1994. The second step for strengthening relation was the signing of the 1997 Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, which established the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) to take cooperation forward. NATO and Ukraine cooperation covers a wide range of areas, such as peace-support operations, defence and security sector reform, military-to-military cooperation, defence technology, interoperability and industry, civil preparedness, science and environment, and public diplomacy. According to the NATO official website the Declaration to Complement the Charter, signed in 2009, gave the NUC a central role in deepening political dialogue and cooperation to underpin Ukraine's reform efforts. The principal tool to support this process is the Annual National Programme (ANP), which reflects Ukraine's national reform objectives and annual implementation plans. The ANP is composed of five chapters focusing on: political and economic issues; defence and military issues; resources; security issues; and legal issues.⁴¹

After the crisis in Ukraine in 2016 NATO defence ministers agreed to boost NATO's support for Ukraine with a Comprehensive Assistance Package, which aims to help Ukraine strengthen its defences by building stronger security structures.

It is worth to pay more attention on Ukrainian case from pre-Bucharest period. Thus, before Bucharest summit in 2008, where Ukraine got a promise to become a NATO member one day, this country has been participated in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PFP) program and had an "Intensified Dialogue" with NATO on possible future membership in NATO and related reforms. In the same year of summit, in January 2008, Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, Prime-Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko, and parliament speaker Arseniy Yatsenyuk sent a letter to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer requesting a Membership Action Plan for the country at the upcoming NATO summit in Bucharest. In that period, supporters of a MAP for Ukraine believed that it was important to give the pro-Western government in Kiev a strong signal of support for its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. However, as mentioned above, Ukraine's MAP candidacy faces several challenges. The first and key challenge was Ukrainian public opinion on NATO membership. Public opinion polls demonstrated that less than one-quarter of the population supports NATO membership. It is important to mention that the opinion from region to region was

⁴¹ Relations with Ukraine, Nato.int [online] https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_37750.htm

different. People living in southern and eastern Ukraine tend to oppose NATO membership, because inhabitants in these regions, whether ethnic Russians or Ukrainians, tend to be Russian-speaking, supported close ties with Russia. They fear that it will worsen ties with Russia. Supporters of membership are from western Ukraine, where Ukrainian-speakers dominate and support for a Western orientation for Ukraine is high.

As in the case of the Baltic states, the US administration supported Ukraine as well but warning that the support for MAP should be not only in the framework of government, but in the public. To gain public support Ukraine needs to educate people about NATO, must continue defense reforms and etc. European attitude towards Ukraine in 2008 pre-summit period was clear. Key European nations, such as Germany and France were reluctant to consider a MAP for Ukraine at Bucharest because Ukraine's qualifications for a MAP were weak. Also they were concerned about damaging relations with Russia. Particularly, in March 2008, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said, "I cannot hide my skepticism" about Ukraine's chances for a MAP. At the NATO foreign ministers' meeting, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and other European leaders stressed the need for maintaining good relations with Moscow.⁴²

Russia have been hostile to Ukraine's possible NATO membership. It viewed the former Soviet republic as its sphere of influence, in which Western countries and institutions should play little role. Russian President Vladimir Putin in February, 2008 in response to a question about Ukraine's possible membership warned that "Russia might be forced to take military countermeasures, including aiming missiles against Ukraine, if Kiev hosted foreign bases or joined the U.S. missile defense project".⁴³

The Ukraine crisis that erupted in early 2014 has brought an end to the post-Cold War status quo in Europe. The Ukraine crisis has taken place in a period of U.S.-Russian rivalry, even confrontation. Dmitri Trenin in his "The Ukraine Crisis and the Resumption of Great-Power Rivalry" mentions that today's situation differs from the Cold War period. The current crisis has global implications, but it is not central to the global system.⁴⁴

The crisis was a surprise to many, in Ukraine itself, Russia, the European Union, and the United States. Many experts think, that the Ukraine crisis was immediately preceded by competition between the EU and Russia for the future geoeconomic orientation of Ukraine. But before it, the situation was hostile since 2008 Georgian-Russian war. Several post-Soviet countries want to become a member of European Union and NATO. This is not a good idea for Russia,

⁴² CRS report for Congress, Enlargement Issues at NATO's Bucharest Summit , 2008
<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34415.pdf>

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Trenin, Dmitri, The Ukraine Crisis and the Resumption of Great-Power Rivalry, 2014
<http://carnegie.ru/2014/07/09/ukraine-crisis-and-resumption-of-great-power-rivalry-pub-56113>

because this country still consider post-soviet space as it backyard. Competition for the maintaining the influence in these countries brought hostile relations between Russia and the West, particularly between Russia and US.

Thus, Brussels and Moscow each saw Ukraine as an important element of their own geopolitical project. Eventually, both Russia and the EU came to see Ukraine's choice as a zero-sum game and worked hard to influence the outcome. Moscow first showed Ukraine, in the form of trade barriers, what it would lose from choosing the EU over Russia and, later, in the form of an aid package, what it would gain if it made the "right" choice. It is like "carrot and stick approach", when in one hand Russia tried to admire Ukraine and on the other hand, it threatened with punishments. As a result, Yanukovich in November 2013 suspended a political and economic association agreement that Kiev had been due to sign with the EU. After it, he accepted a generous financial and economic package from Russia. This make Ukrainian population angry and they started to protest in the street. This civic protest became known as the Maidan.

In the beginning, the United States was not focused on the Ukrainian developments. Ukraine was not a foreign policy priority for the U.S. president. Then it started to pay more attention to the crisis. These developments were traumatic for Moscow. Russia was expelled from the G8 group, which returned to being the G7. The EU downgraded its relations with Russia, while NATO froze its cooperation with Moscow. The United States led its allies in imposing sanctions against Russian officials, companies, and etc. The goal was to damage Russia as much as possible, that it backs down on Ukraine.

It is also important to mention, that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia was considered as a junior actor in international arena and not as a global power. The same can not say about Russia's foreign policies. After the collapse of the USSR, only according to Kozyrev Doctrine Russia could have strategic partnership with the West, becoming part of the West. Then from Primakov Doctrine, Russia's foreign policy interests were multipolar international system and Great Power balancing, or in other words recovering Great Power status. Before 2008, when former president of Russia Dimitri Medvedev changed the Foreign Policy concept, Russia mentions, that he is a Great Power "velikaya derzhava", after the change of concept, Russia considers itself as a "one of the leading centers of the contemporary world."⁴⁵

Coming back to Ukraine crisis, need to mention, that the crisis has led Russia to openly challenge the post-Cold War. Dmitri Trenin thinks that "Even though Russia and the United States had a close brush with confrontation in 2008 in Georgia, that episode was too brief, too peripheral,

⁴⁵ Mankoff, Jeffrey. *Russian Foreign Policy : The Return of Great Power Politics* . Blue Ridge Summit, PA, USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2009, page 13

and very soon overshadowed by the global crisis and the change of administration in Washington to leave lasting traces. Georgia did not change post–Cold War history. Ukraine did.⁴⁶

The situation after Crimea crisis brought new developments both in NATO-Ukraine and NATO-Russia relations. After the total control of Russian Federation to Crimea, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Brussels Forum on 21st of March, 2014 characterized Russia's military aggression as "the most serious crisis in Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall," and declared that NATO can "no longer do business as usual with Russia".⁴⁷

NATO's response to the crisis focused on demonstrating support for Ukraine and its territorial integrity. In early April, NATO announced the suspension of civilian and military cooperation with Russia in the framework of the NATO-Russia Council. Political dialogue between the two sides will continue. Member countries agreed to strengthen political and military cooperation with Kyiv, which includes providing military trainers to assist in Ukraine's military modernization efforts and improving the interoperability of Ukrainian and allied armed forces through exercises and joint operations. In June of the same year, Secretary General Rasmussen announced about the creation of several new NATO trust funds to help develop Ukrainian defense capacity. This includes areas of logistics, command and control, cyber defense, and assisting retired military personnel to adapt to civilian life.

NATO did not provide Ukraine with military hardware, though bilateral military assistance from individual allies, such as from the US took place. It is important to mention, that according to several press reports in 2013 Ukrainian government requested military aid from the United States. Though the full list, which Ukraine needed was not published, but again press reported that "Ukraine has asked for arms and ammunition, communications gear, intelligence support, aviation fuel, night-vision goggles, mine-clearing equipment, vehicles, medical gear, and other items".⁴⁸

According to the White House 2014 April fact sheet, the US e detailed an \$18 million security assistance package for Ukraine. The amount included 300,000 Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) to Ukraine in March, at a cost of about \$3 million. The Administration also provided an additional nearly \$7 million in health and welfare assistance to Ukraine's armed forces. There was an additional \$8 million non-lethal support, which includes explosive ordinance disposal equipment and handheld radios for Ukraine's military and engineering equipment, communications equipment, vehicles, and non-lethal individual tactical gear for Ukraine's border

⁴⁶ Trenin, Dmitri, The Ukraine Crisis and the Resumption of Great-Power Rivalry, 2014

<http://carnegie.ru/2014/07/09/ukraine-crisis-and-resumption-of-great-power-rivalry-pub-56113>

⁴⁷ NATO, "A Strong NATO in a Changed World," Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Brussels Forum," March 21, 2014.

⁴⁸ CRS report for Congress, NATO: Response to the Crisis in Ukraine and Security Concerns in Central and Eastern Europe, 2014 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34415.pdf>

guards. In the next days and months the US administration announced about other support. Thus total security assistance to Ukraine since the beginning of the crisis was \$33 million.

Russian actions in Ukraine pushed some U.S. observers and Members of Congress to call for a more concerted NATO effort to enlarge the alliance, particularly to the east. They argue that continued enlargement would send an important signal to aspiring members that "NATO's "open door" policy will not be scaled back in the face of Russian opposition. Some proponents of enlargement add that Russia would be less willing and less able to take the aggressive actions it has in Ukraine, Georgia, and elsewhere in its near-abroad if these countries were members of the alliance".⁴⁹

But despite these calls, most analysts considered that NATO can not make any significant progress toward expanding over the next several years, because there is a perception in some Western European countries that NATO has enlarged too quickly. The alliance should agree on how to resolve several issues, including relations with Russia, before taking in new members. The Ukrainian government under President Yanukovich have said the country is not seeking NATO membership. According to one March 2014 opinion poll, 34% of Ukrainians were for NATO membership, and 44% opposed.

It is worth to mention, that even though NATO made several statements about the crisis, provided political assistance, 2 NATO members — France and Germany had a specific position towards the conflict. Several researchers even mentions, that France and German reaction was very similar to the stance they adopted against US when it with its key allies in NATO intervened in Iraq. The leaders of France and Germany worked hard to find a peaceful solution of the conflict because of their close economic and trade ties to Moscow. In 2015, French President François Hollande talking about the peace plan, which was introduced both to Ukraine and Russia by Germany and France, said that "France was "opposed to Ukraine joining Nato", one of Russia's fears, and some guarantee along those lines may also be part of the plan".⁵⁰ So it is obvious, that the crisis can not change anything in the agenda of France and Germany on NATO further enlargement. Russia is a valuable partner and both countries value it.

NATO has recently updated its website to mention Ukraine as one of four aspirant countries. Then several Ukrainian officials showed it as a major breakthrough in getting closer to membership of the NATO. Even Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko wrote in his Facebook

⁴⁹ CRS report for Congress, NATO: Response to the Crisis in Ukraine and Security Concerns in Central and Eastern Europe, 2014, page 16 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34415.pdf>

⁵⁰ Ukraine crisis: Francois Hollande and Angela Merkel make desperate attempt to convince the two sides to accept a political solution, Independent.co.uk [online] <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-crisis-hollande-and-merkel-in-ukraine-peace-mission-10025495.html>

page that the MAP was Ukraine's "next ambition" . As a response to changes in the website NATO official told RFE/RL that the alliance has not changed its position on Ukraine.⁵¹

Anyway, in reality, nothing has changed. Valeriya Klymenko, a Ukrainian foreign policy analyst, in one of her articles mentions that "instead of pushing western allies to grant something they are not ready to, Ukraine should focus on doing its homework (that is to fulfil a series of military, political, economic, and legal criteria) and be prepared for when a window of opportunity emerges".⁵² This one more time shows that Ukraine's preparation to meet NATO standards is not enough, because for membership is important not only strong desire, but also being prepared in all areas of cooperation. It is also true when you compare Ukraine's and Georgia's efforts for membership. The level of cooperation and readiness of Georgia in many areas is high. Thus, not only the countries themselves, but also NATO members see the difference. Klymenko also mentions a to-do list, which is important to follow. For the first, "Ukraine should focus on practical and achievable tasks and avoid setting unrealistic targets that it cannot meet. President Petro Poroshenko has already made several missteps by proclaiming Ukraine's MAP aspiration, reaching NATO membership criteria by 2020, as well as plans to hold a referendum on NATO membership". The analyst also states that it is important to prove yourself as a credible partner to NATO. This means that Ukraine needs to show that it is fully committed, not only in words but also in deeds, to all principles and values, which are explicit in the preamble to the Washington Treaty. She also mentions very important thing, which is substantial not only in Ukrainian case, but also for other aspirant countries: "NATO membership is not the end goal, but rather a powerful national security tool".⁵³

2.4 NATO and Georgia: high level of cooperation and obstacles

Georgia has started cooperation with NATO since 1992. It will not be wrong to say, that after 1992 the first decade was quiet enough, though presidents of already independent Georgia have stressed the importance of cooperation with Europe from the beginning. Since the presidency of Mikheil Saakashvili the cooperation between NATO and Georgia increased. This growing cooperation was and is very important for Georgia and for Russia this relationship is considered as threat for South Caucasus region and in general to its security.

Cooperation between NATO and Georgia started in 1992, when this state joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and the Partnership for Peace in 1994. In 1999 the country joined

⁵¹ Poroshenko: Ukraine Seeking NATO Membership Action Plan, rferl.org [online] <https://www.rferl.org/a/nato-ukraine-poroshenko-membership-action-plan/29090212.html>

⁵² Ukraine in NATO: Ambition Is Not Enough, We Must Deliver, emerging-europe.com [online] <https://emerging-europe.com/voices/ukraine-nato-ambition-not-enough-must-deliver/>

⁵³ Ibid

the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP) to help its forces develop the ability to work with NATO and to improve defence planning. In the same year the country started contributing peacekeepers to the Kosovo Force (KFOR). In 2001 and 2002 Georgia hosted multinational PfP military training exercises. Already in 2002 Georgia declared its aspirations to NATO membership and its intention to develop an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO to sharpen the focus of cooperation on reform efforts.⁵⁴ The main decision for Georgia was made during 2008 Bucharest Summit (Georgia will become a NATO member). Later this decision was reconfirmed at NATO Summits in 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016. Now the main document is Substantial NATO-Georgia Package, which should "help Georgia in its efforts to improve its defence capabilities and to achieve its goal of NATO membership".

As mentioned in NATO's website "dialogue and cooperation deepened after the "Rose Revolution" in 2003, when the new government pushed for more ambitious reforms". Thus, in 2003 Georgia participated in ISAF's election security force in Afghanistan. Later in 2004 during the Istanbul Summit, Allied leaders put special focus on the Caucasus – a special representative and a liaison officer were assigned to the region. In 2004 Georgia became the first country to agree an IPAP with NATO. Georgia also continued to host international military exercises. The country began to develop a foreign policy directions. Thus Georgia has published its 2005 National Security Concept of Georgia, where it is mentioned that "Integration to NATO and the EU represents a top priority of Georgian foreign and security policy" (page 7). During period of presidency of Saakashvili several visits were held to NATO Headquarters and NATO Secretary General visited to Georgia. Later in 2010 the NATO Liaison Office is inaugurated in Tbilisi during the NATO Secretary General's visit to Georgia, where he meets the Georgian president, prime minister and senior ministers.

Many experts, politicians think that August war in 2008 prevented dynamic development of relations and further membership. Just several months before the war, took place Bucharest summit, where Georgia got a promise one day become a NATO member and that the MAP is the next step. It should be noted that "the Membership Action Plan (MAP) is a NATO programme of advice, assistance and practical support tailored to the individual needs of countries wishing to join the Alliance. Participation in the MAP does not prejudice any decision by the Alliance on future membership". It is clear that MAP is not a guarantee for further membership.

Already in August the condition in Georgia changed to the worst. "Brewing tension between Georgia on the one side, and the de-facto authorities of Abkhazia and South Ossetia

⁵⁴ Relations with Georgia, Nato.int [online]
http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm

supported by Russia on the other, exploded into violent conflict. When the world's attention was focused on the opening of the Olympic Games in Beijing — at night of 7 August, 2008 — Georgian troops launched a major offensive against Tskhinvali, the main town of South Ossetia”.⁵⁵

It must be noticed that before the military actions the situation in the bordering parts had been deteriorating: Georgian troops and Osset militias were exchanging mortar fire.

Oksana Antonenko in her “A war with no winners” article mentions that “When Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili launched military force on 7 August 2008 in South Ossetia, he insisted that he had been provoked. Russia’s military build-up over many months in Abkhazia and on the border with South Ossetia seemed to indicate that Moscow was ready to punish Georgia for what it saw as a strategic challenge to its new geopolitical ambitions”.⁵⁶

She also mentions that few expected such a muted response, with both Washington and Brussels taking days to issue clear statements in support of Tbilisi. Only after Russian troops crossed into Georgia proper and started to bomb towns, West started to issue strong statements pressuring Russia to withdraw. Ronald Asmus in his "A little war that shook the world" book speaks about Georgia's expectations from the West. He mentions the following: "Tbilisi had been trying to raise alarm bells. They had pleaded with the West to intervene with Moscow directly to halt this escalation, to put truly neutral observers or peacekeepers on the ground in the separatist regions instead of Russian ones, and to change the existing formats to give life to a moribund peace process in order to halt the downward spiral taking place. But the West, disinclined to push Moscow and reluctant to assume the risks of expanding its presence on the ground, was not eager to take such steps".⁵⁷ This once again proves that confrontation didn't not come from the interests of the West. The senior fellow of the Center for Euro-Atlantic Security of the Moscow State University Yulia Kudryashova in her "NATO's reaction to the early stages of the conflict" article mentions that NATO's reaction to the events in South Ossetia in the initial phase of the conflict (August 7-8) differed restraint and slowness. "Brussels waited for official Washington reaction and generates a relative consensus among the members of the alliance. During this period, even Secretary General of NATO tried not to go on contact with the press, "play for time" was entrusted to his deputies, who spoke with insipid comments. Only on 8 August 2008 Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the NATO Secretary General expressed serious concern about the events".⁵⁸ This shows that NATO's political and military staff was not ready for sharp and unprepared statements and steps.

⁵⁵ Cheterian, Vicken. War and Peace in the Caucasus, Oxford university press, 2008, page 373

⁵⁶ Antonenko, Oksana 'A War with No Winners', Survival, Routledge, 2008, page 23

⁵⁷ Ronald D. Asmus, A Little War that Shook the World: Georgia, Russia, and the Future of the West, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, page 2

⁵⁸ Кудряшова Ю.С., Центр Евро-атлантической безопасности МГИМО (У) МИД РФ Реакция НАТО на ранних этапах конфликта, 27 January, 2009 <http://ia-centr.ru/expert/3685/>

Ambassadors of NATO member countries gathered to discuss the situation in Georgia in extraordinary session only on August 12. Moscow's proposal to discuss the situation in South Ossetia in NATO + Russia format, the Alliance refused.

David Darchiashvili in his "The August War: A Case for International Relations Theory and an Understanding of Modern Threats" book mentions that "this attack did not seem to have an alternative in the political sense, while the purely military-technical modalities of its conduct do deserve separate and more critical scrutiny. Pre-history and context show that not attacking bore more risks for the political security of Georgia than an open military confrontation with Russia". It is said that "a bad peace is better than a good war".⁵⁹

There was no significant change in the Georgian foreign policy when billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili came to power in 2013. In the same year he announced that he will do everything so that the country gets MAP in 2014.⁶⁰ In Brussels in 2014 already ex-president Barack Obama stated the following: "Neither Ukraine nor Georgia are currently on a path to NATO membership"

⁶¹ This statement was a real shock for both the government and society, because before it Georgian Government assured the public that during forthcoming summit they will get MAP. In Wales summit Georgia got an important package —Substantial NATO-Georgia Package. According to NATO "The Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP) is a set of measures and initiatives aimed at strengthening Georgia's defence capabilities and developing closer security cooperation and interoperability with NATO Members. The SNGP includes support to 13 different areas of the defence and security-related sectors, across all three military services. It involves strategic level advice and liaison, defence capacity-building and training activities, multi-national exercises and enhanced interoperability opportunities"⁶². This package is really important for Georgia's military sphere, air defence, etc. After this many Georgians thought that implementation of this package would give a MAP to Georgia. Moreover, a year before Warsaw summit, Georgia's military and political staff started to visit NATO's and EU's member countries trying to convince them in their positions.

⁵⁹ Darchiashvili David, The August War: A Case for International Relations, Theory and an Understanding of Modern Threats, Iliia State University, 2012, page 51

⁶⁰ (ოვანიშვილი MAP-ის მიღებას მომავალი წლის მიზნად ისახავს, Civil.ge [online], 1 May, 2013 <http://www.civil.ge/geo/article.php?id=26831>

⁶¹ Neither Ukraine nor Georgia are currently on a path to NATO membership' – Obama , Georgian Journal [online] <http://www.georgianjournal.ge/politics/26742-neither-ukraine-nor-georgia-are-currently-on-a-path-to-nato-membership--obama.html>

⁶² Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP), NATO.int [online], http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_12/20151209_151209-factsheet-nato-georgia-package.pdf,)

Although Georgia since 2008 have received many promises from NATO leadership and leadership of the member countries that one day Georgia will become a member, but during the last year before Warsaw summit official statements by government officials were different. For instance, NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia James Appathurai several times stated that NATO does not want to irritate Russia and "endanger" Georgia. Moreover, in one of interviews, Appathurai emphasized that Georgia will not get the MAP at the NATO summit in Warsaw in 2016.⁶³ It is clear that NATO's leadership does not want to do decisive steps. And already during Warsaw summit NATO again said that Georgia needs a time for better preparation for possible membership. Membership and MAP were again unreachable for Georgia.

Chapter 3: Position of Berlin and Paris towards NATO membership of Ukraine and Georgia

3.1 France and German foreign policies towards post-Soviet countries

After the collapse of the Soviet Union France and Germany recognized the independence of former Soviet republics. Cooperation and relations of these countries in post-Soviet space differ from country to country. In general, France and German foreign policy approaches are mainly influenced by the cooperation with successor of the Soviet Union — Russia. This country has the biggest role on Franco-German engagement in the post-Soviet space. Both countries try not harm the relations with Russia.

France's foreign policy is dominated by its relationship with the countries of the southern Mediterranean and with sub-Saharan Africa. As former colonies, these countries are the flagships of Francophony. Political relations with them are considered by Paris to be crucial, and are influenced by long-term commercial interests, as well as by the desire to build a constructive dialogue with the countries of origin of much of the new French populations. The Eastern Partnership is judged by Paris to be of secondary importance and is to an extent left up to German and other European countries' direction, although France's traditionally positive relations with Russia are nurtured. French interest in Asia is growing beyond the traditional framework of Southeast Asia (former French Indochina), essentially motivated by commercial considerations.

⁶³ (რას მიიღებს საქართველო ვარშავის სამიტზე MAP-ის ნაცვლად - ექსკლუზიური ინტერვიუ ჯეიმს აპათურაისთან, 1არბი [online, February 7, 2016] <http://1tv.ge/ge/videos/view/157575/585.html>

Central Asia thus seems to be a relatively marginal zone for French foreign policy as compared with the Mediterranean, Russia and Asia.⁶⁴ As for security issues, France has used Dushanbe international airport for NATO operations in Afghanistan. In exchange France has developed its military cooperation with Tajikistan, in particular through joint exercises in parachuting, as well as restoring the airport landing strip and granting a loan for the construction of a new terminal. France left the place in 2014.

Germany in its turn also has a good relationship with Central Asia. Germany placed great emphasis on relationships with Central Asia during its EU presidency period in 2007. It should be mentioned that in this period established the most extensive policy developed by the EU for Central Asia. It calls the EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership, which was formalized by intense work of Germany. By the way, Central Asia has a special importance for Germany's foreign policy, whereas Kazakhstan has more special and important place in Central Asia, and such interest is not a result of ideological approaches but a diplomacy required by political, cultural and economical facts.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Germany made great contribution to the progress of relations between the EU and the countries in the area during its presidency. It should be mentioned, that Germans living in Kazakhstan also has a significant role in Germany's Central Asia policy.

As mentioned above, the 'South' remains a greater priority for Paris than the 'East'. But during the last decade France's strategic interest and diplomatic engagement in the Eastern neighborhood have increased. Nevertheless, France has played a central role in two important cases in the Eastern Neighbourhood: first, it acted as a peace-broker in the 2008 Russian-Georgian war and the second with Germany it is still co-leading the mediation in the Eastern Ukraine.⁶⁶ France also is a co-chair in the OSCE Minsk Group, which works on peaceful solution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

France's involvement in Russian-Georgian conflict solution resulted in the "Medvedev – Sarkozy Plan." In August, Nicolas Sarkozy, the President of France, visited the region and suggested France mediation. As for Ukrainian case, Paris firmly supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Eastern neighborhood countries and condemns the actions by Russia that violate them. France's reaction to Crimea in particular has been clear: it has cancelled the delivery of Mistral warships to Russia, suspended its annual bilateral strategic meetings with Moscow and supported the EU sanctions regime. Though, inside the EU, France stands among the member

⁶⁴ France and Central Asia, Sébastien Peyrouse, http://fride.org/download/PB9_FR.pdf

⁶⁵ The Role of Germany in European Union's Central Asia Cultural and Education Policy, http://www.serdarylmaz.com/dosyalar/konferanslar/The_Role_of_Germany_in_European_Unions_Central%20Asia%20Policy.pdf

⁶⁶ France's policies toward the Eastern Partnership countries in context, <http://gip.ge/frances-policies-toward-the-eastern-partnership-countries-in-context/>

states that believe that it is important for the EU to keep lines of dialogue with Moscow open and for both sides to avoid unnecessary inflammatory postures. "Dialogue should not be dismissed as a return to 'business as usual'".⁶⁷

As for the Baltic states, France supported them for their path to NATO and EU membership from the beginning. Though Germany opposed in the first period of their efforts, about which we speak in the first chapter, now German attitude towards the Baltic states is normal. Moreover, France and Germany are one of the most active contributors to the NATO Air Policing Mission in the Baltic states: they have deployed many rotations and one augmentation (conducted from Malbork Air Base in Poland). France in its turn, has a contingent in Estonia and Lithuania.⁶⁸

It should be emphasized that foreign policies of both countries mainly influenced by their national and security interests. Thus, it is important to remember that they will value their national interests and give preference to the country or region, with whom or where their interests match.

3.2 Blocking policy of Germany and France towards Ukraine and Georgia in NATO enlargement summits

When Ukraine and Georgia announced about their wish to be a part of NATO, several members of the Alliance adopted a denial policy towards these countries. In particular, two leading nation in Europe — Germany and France have strong opposition towards these countries membership. Their attitude mainly influenced by Russia and their cooperation.

The membership of Georgia and Ukraine in NATO is supported especially by the U.S. and new members of NATO (except for Hungary). Eunika Katarzyna Frydrych in her "The Debate on NATO Expansion" article mentions that not only Germany and France, but other countries are also against Georgian and Ukrainian membership. "There is significant opposition from such nations as Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and Hungary. They are not only against the membership of Georgia and Ukraine in NATO, but are also opposed to granting them MAP status. The listed group of nations is concerned that, by enhancing relations with Georgia and Ukraine, the Alliance may cause further disputes between NATO members and Russia".⁶⁹ At the NATO Bucharest summit to the request of Georgia and

⁶⁷ Defusing future crises in the shared neighbourhood: Can a clash between the West and Russia be prevented? ,europeanleadershipnetwork.org [online] <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/policy-brief/defusing-future-crises-in-the-shared-neighbourhood-can-a-clash-between-the-west-and-russia-be-prevented/>

⁶⁸ Of All Things the French Soldiers Have Brought to Lithuania, The Most Important One is their Experience, defense-aerospace.com [online] <http://www.defense-aerospace.com/articles-view/release/3/190061/french-soldiers%E2%80%99-experience-is-important-to-lithuania.html>

⁶⁹ Eunika Katarzyna Frydrych, The Debate on NATO Expansion, page 32)

Ukraine to grant a MAP for their further membership, these countries got promise with unusual formulation. NATO members agreed that Georgia and Ukraine will become NATO members one day and that the MAP is the next step. In the CRS report for Congress is mentioned, that although the US. State Department officials have contended that only Germany opposed the MAP for the two governments because Berlin was concerned about a negative reaction in Moscow to putting two neighboring countries on the road to membership, but according to CRS interviews "in addition to to Germany, representatives of France and at least two other governments indicated that they wish the MAP process to go more slowly; they opposed Georgia's and Ukraine's entry into the MAP at this time". The report provided also that several other governments also opposed the MAP for Georgia and Ukraine but would not have blocked consensus, if it was. According to the interviews, some governments indicated a desire not to antagonize Russia, they said that larger issues were also considered. NATO members also took into consideration the public opinion of Ukraine about membership. And as it was very low some allies believe that Kiev must persuade its population of the value of membership before the MAP process can begin.

There was also a concern about Georgian parliamentary elections, which should take place in May 2008. Members suggest that Georgia should achieve acceptable international standards, and that it must make progress on resolving its two "frozen" conflicts within its territory.

As it mentioned above, the US Administration was the main supporter for Georgia and Ukraine. But member states criticized the Administration for the MAP. According to CRS, several allies had clearly indicated before the summit their opposition to Georgia and Ukraine joining the MAP, and that President Bush's campaign in Georgia and Ukraine, and then at the summit, to persuade them to change their minds ignored their concerns. They also noted that their opposition to the MAP for the two countries went well beyond concern over Russia's possible reaction to a favorable decision.⁷⁰

As mentioned afore already, Ukraine and Georgia can count on backing from NATO members in Eastern and Central Europe. One observer wrote before summit the following: "These nations firmly believe that Ukraine is strategically important for European security, and a MAP would promote needed military reform and accelerate European integration. Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the Baltic States argue that a negative response to Ukraine's ambitions would reverse NATO's 'open door' policy for new members."⁷¹ Thus, to show their support, in March 2008 before the NATO summit nine Eastern/Central European states and Canada sent a letter to the NATO Secretary-General expressing support for granting Georgia and Ukraine the

⁷⁰ CRS report for Congress, The NATO Summit at Bucharest, 2008 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS22847.pdf>

⁷¹ Adrian J. Erlinger, "Ukraine's NATO Dilemma," ISN Security Watch (2 April 2008); available at www.isn.ethz.ch/news/sw/details.cfm?ID=18810.

MAP. But it is important to mention, that NATO is not a Secretary General and his position is not enough. NATO makes decisions on the basis of consensus, and every single member should give its positive vote for aspirant country's membership.

During the four most recent NATO summits (2012 in Chicago, 2014 in Wales, 2016 in Warsaw, 2018 in Brussels), Georgia was to receive a Membership Action Plan (MAP) but did not. In 2014, before the Wales summit German Chancellor Angela Merkel that MAP for Georgia will be on the agenda of NATO summit in Wales in September, adding that there are options other than MAP through which Georgia's progress can be reflected in summit decisions. "But we see the progress Georgia is making; we also see how Georgia contributes to joint efforts, for example in Afghanistan. For the next NATO summit we should consider how to acknowledge that Georgia is a good partner, especially in these difficult missions, and I think that there are also ways other than MAP to do it," the German Chancellor said.⁷² Several days later, Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen repeated that the NATO Summit in Wales in September "will not be about Membership Action Plan" for Georgia. Rasmussen added that a package would offer "more support to bring Georgia closer to NATO".⁷³ Thus, in Wales summit Georgia got an important package — Substantial NATO-Georgia Package.

In the next summits there was no substantial change in the rhetoric of NATO member states. After every summit, NATO published the official declaration, which once again reaffirms NATO promise in Bucharest about Georgian and Ukrainian possible membership and MAP. Concerning Germany and France, these countries block Georgia's and Ukraine's possible membership and slow the process of granting the MAP to them. It is noteworthy that though Germany and France, also other countries who also stand behind them, mainly value their relationship with Russia and do not consider as a threat. For instance, in 2016 after Warsaw summit French President François Hollande said: "NATO has no role at all to be saying what Europe's relations with Russia should be. For France, Russia is not an adversary, not a threat." He also added that Russia is a "partner which, it is true, may sometimes, and we have seen that in Ukraine, use force, which we have condemned when it annexed Crimea".⁷⁴

It is important to pay attention on the fact, that inspite of France block Georgia's membership, it helps to strengthen Georgia's Air defense capabilities. The contract with France on the delivery of high-tech anti-aircraft missile systems to the Georgian military were concluded by the previous

⁷² Merkel Sees No MAP for Georgia at NATO Summit in Wales, civil.ge [online] <https://old.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=27301>

⁷³ No membership step for Georgia at NATO Wales Summit, Agenda.ge [online] <http://agenda.ge/news/16682/eng>

⁷⁴ NATO BACKS A FREE UKRAINE. ONLY FRANCE IS OUT OF STEP, newsweek.com [online] <http://www.newsweek.com/nato-backs-free-ukraine-only-france-out-step-479384>

head of the Georgian Ministry of Defense, Tinatin Khidasheli. On June 15, 2015, the Georgian side signed a contract with the French-American joint venture ThalesRaytheonSystems to purchase several 3-D mobile air target detection radar stations—Ground Master 200 (GM200) and Ground Master 400 (GM400) models. A month later, on July 10, Khidasheli signed a contract with the French branch of the European MBDA group (MBDA France) and Thales for the delivery of one VL MICA short-range surface-to-air missile system battery. The details of the transaction are considered a state secret in Georgia, but it is known that in 2016, the country's parliament permitted the government to receive a loan of 82.82 million euros (\$90.26 million) from the French bank SocieteGenerale under the auspices of the French export-import insurance agency Coface. However, these purchased defensive weapons systems still have not arrived in Georgia.

The editor-in-chief of the military-analytical magazine *Arsenali*, Irakli Aladashvili, during the interview with Giorgi Menabde told that due to the secrecy of the transaction, the parties did not publish the exact schedule of deliveries. According to the author, Aladashvili also mentioned the following: "In the first stage, the French military would train Georgian professionals who, in the future, would operate the high-tech anti-aircraft missiles. Our specialists are currently well acquainted [only] with the Soviet/Russian air defense systems that the Georgian army is armed with". In his opinion, the actual delivery of the French air defense and missile defense systems will begin only in the second stage.⁷⁵

Chapter 4: Russia-NATO relations in the light of enlargement process

4.1 Russian-NATO official relations from the perspective of US-Russian confrontation

The end of the Cold War gave an opportunity to NATO and Russia forget about their confrontation and start to cooperate. From 1991 NATO began to work hard to establish a strategic partnership with Russia. In June 1994, Russia became the first country to join NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP). Later in 1997, NATO leaders and President Boris Yeltsin signed the NATO-Russia Founding Act, expressing their determination to "build together a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security." According to the Act, areas of cooperation were peacekeeping, arms control, counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics and theatre missile defence. In the Founding Act, NATO and Russia agreed to

⁷⁵ Tbilisi Still Waiting on Delivery of Its Purchased Missile and Air Defense Systems From Paris, jamestown.org [online] <https://jamestown.org/program/tbilisi-still-waiting-delivery-purchased-missile-air-defense-systems-paris/>

base their cooperation on the principles of human rights and civil liberties, refraining from the threat or use of force against each other or any other state.⁷⁶

In 2002 NATO leaders and President Vladimir Putin signed a declaration in Rome titled “NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality.” This established the NATO-Russia Council as a consensus-based body of equal members. According to NATO, Russia was the only NATO partner offered such a privileged partnership. NATO and Russia cooperated on supporting Afghanistan – including Russian provision of transit routes for ISAF, counternarcotics training for officers from Afghanistan, Central Asia and Pakistan, and support for the Afghan army’s helicopter fleet.

Already in 2008, Georgian-Russian conflict slowed cooperation. Military action in led to the suspension of formal meetings of the NATO-Russia Council and cooperation in some areas. Allies continue to call on Russia to reverse its recognition of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states. Nevertheless, at the NATO Summit in Strasbourg and Kehl in 2009, NATO leaders acknowledged disagreements with Russia over Georgia, but decided to resume practical and political cooperation. They also expressed their readiness to make the NATO-Russia Council a more efficient vehicle for cooperation. A year later, at Lisbon Summit, NATO leaders and President Dmitry Medvedev agreed to embark on “a new stage of cooperation towards a true strategic partnership”, based on the goals and principles of the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the NATO-Russia Rome Declaration. But already in 2014 after the Crimea crisis NATO Foreign Ministers decided to suspend all practical cooperation with Russia. Since then, Russia has continued its aggressive actions against Ukraine, including destabilising eastern Ukraine. At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, NATO leaders made clear that an improvement in the Alliance’s relations with Russia will be contingent on a clear and constructive change in Russia’s actions, if the country demonstrates compliance with international law and Russia’s international commitments. Until then, NATO and Russia cannot return to “business as usual”. However, channels for communication nevertheless remain open. The NATO-Russia Council, an important platform for dialogue, has never been suspended. The Alliance and NATO also maintain open military-to-military lines of communication, which aim to promote predictability and transparency in our military activities.

It is important to mention also the US and Russia's confrontation under the US new President Donald Trump, which has impact on further cooperation. But, first of all, it is worth to try understand Trump's perception towards NATO and US. In NATO Brussels summit Donald Trump said US can go it alone if allies don’t meet spending target. Then he insisted that Nato

⁷⁶ NATO, NATO-Russia Relations: The Background, 2017
https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_11/20171107_1711-NATO-Russia_en.pdf

countries should double the 2 per cent of their budget spent on defence to 4 per cent. Trump stressed that Nato's budget had been unfair to the United States – referring to the US having paid "90 per cent" of Nato. In reality, last year the US paid 71 per cent of the total paid toward Nato.⁷⁷

American President also stated during the summit, that Germany is “totally controlled” by Russia because of a controversial gas pipeline project called Nord Stream 2.⁷⁸

To understand Trump's rhetoric we should look through America's new National Defense Strategy. On 19 January, 2018 the US Department of Defense published an unclassified synopsis of the President Donald Trump administration's first National Defense Strategy.⁷⁹ The document unveiled by Secretary of Defense James Mattis. That was the most open and clear since 1991, because of its targeted messages to the world actors. According to the Strategy, “Inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security”. (US 2018 National Defense Strategy, page 1) Defense Strategy released with clear priority: Stay ahead of Russia and China. The new strategy reminds of the Cold War, when things were quite clear and everyone knew how to behave. Important to mention, that the idea of “balance of power”, which is the basic realpolitik notion, appears several times in the new US defense strategy.

Two versions of the US National Defense strategy were drawn up: one secret, one public. The version released to the public was 11 pages long and documented a range of military needs for the coming years, involving everything from nuclear weapons to cyber capabilities to war-fighting strategies. The main message of the document is that China and Russia are considered biggest threats for US. Many countries, officials and experts believe that the new defense strategy, for sure, is a return to the Cold War. It is interesting that in previous, 2012 National Defense Strategy Russia was mentioned only one time and with positive light. "Our engagement with Russia remains important, and we will continue to build a closer relationship in areas of mutual interest and encourage it to be a contributor across a broad range of issues". After 6 years "closer relationship" changed into competition and treath. (US 2012 National Defense Strategy (NDS), page 3)

It is interesting, that realist theorists always argue that great power rivalry is not over. For instance, Mearsheimer believes that dangerous security competition still exist and major powers still fear

⁷⁷ Trump says 'I believe in Nato' after reports he was threatening to pull US out of alliance, independent.co.uk [online] <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/trump-nato-us-membership-emergency-meeting-summit-brussels-a8443671.html>

⁷⁸ Trump's whiplash NATO summit, politico [online] <https://www.politico.eu/article/trump-threatens-to-pull-out-of-nato/>

⁷⁹ The National Defense Strategy (NDS) is used in the PPBE Process to establish the objectives for the plans for military force structure, force modernization, business processes, supporting infrastructure, and required resources (funding and manpower). The NDS serves as the DoD's capstone document in this long-term effort. <http://acqnotes.com/acqnote/acquisitions/national-defense-strategy-nds>

each other. This exactly explains today's geopolitical situation, major powers attempts, aggressive actions, even such behavior risk war. Realism clearly explains that states prone to wars, conflicts, because the essential goal for them is survival and maintaining the hegemony.

Back to the document, which serves as the Administration's roadmap for global security, says China and Russia aim to upend the global hierarchy that the United States has sat atop of since World War II. US Defense Secretary James Mattis at John Hopkins' School of Advanced International Studies in Washington stated that the "strategy is fit for our time". Definitely, it goes back to the Cold War-era where the U.S. and Soviet Union projected power and military might around the globe.

The strategy document also explains, why a huge money is needed from the budget. "We cannot expect success fighting tomorrow's conflicts with yesterday's weapons or equipment". Doing so, the strategy force to invest in modernization of key capabilities through sustained, predictable budgets. "We will make targeted, disciplined increases in personnel and platforms to meet key capability and capacity needs. The 2018 National Defense Strategy underpins our planned fiscal year 2019-2023 budgets, accelerating our modernization programs and devoting additional resources in a sustained effort to solidify our competitive advantage", document reads. Thus, it is clear, why the US President demanded from the others to support NATO as much, as the US. But despite Trump's "America first" foreign policy rhetoric ("With every decision and every action, we are now putting America first- Trump") and criticisms of NATO, the strategy also underscores the need for strong alliances. "Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to our strategy, providing a durable, asymmetric strategic advantage that no competitor or rival can match". The document also underlines the vitality of "strong and free Europe", "commitment to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty". To my mind, "America first" foreign policy rhetoric" can be explained by Hobbes definition, that there are three causes of quarrels: competition, diffidence (distrust), and glory. Competition leads to fighting for gain, diffidence to fighting to keep what has been gained, glory to fighting for reputation.⁸⁰ As a global power, US guided by all these steps. "America first" phrase shows that president Trump values the glory of America, to see that American hegemony is still exist and can have influence on the world. His aggressive approach and new international agenda prove that above mentioned realist thinking is the most appropriate in this case.

Now it is clear again, that after post-Cold war or in the period of new Cold war two great powers, like the US and Russia consider each other as a threat to their national security. Thus, in one hand

⁸⁰ Waltz, N. Kenneth, Realist thought and neorealist theory, *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.44, 1990, pp 21-37

America — NATO's biggest supplier, has problems with Russia, on the other hand, NATO several members also consider Russia as a threat, shows that geopolitical situation is too complicated. So, new round of NATO enlargement, especially towards the East, can be, maybe, fatal for several countries.

4.2 Russia-Germany and Russia-France bilateral cooperation out of NATO (security and economic issues)

Germany's relationship with Russia is widely considered to be of fundamental importance to European security. To understand Germany's policy towards Russia we should go back to the Soviet period. In 1969 German Chancellor Willy Brandt initiated West Germany's cooperative approach to the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries. The term which describe the approach calls Ostpolitik. As formulated by Brandt's political secretary, Egon Bahr, the key idea of the 'new eastern policy' was to achieve positive 'change through rapprochement' (Wandel durch Annäherung). In the Cold War context, the primary example of Ostpolitik was West Germany's willingness to engage with the Soviet Union through energy cooperation including gas supply, but also pipeline and nuclear projects.⁸¹

At the same time West Germany participated in the western sanctions regime concerning technology transfer to the Soviet Union and its allies, and accepted the deployment of American nuclear missiles on its soil as a response to comparable Soviet nuclear armaments. The author mentions, that "a cooperative approach, understood as the continuation of Ostpolitik, remained at the core of German policy towards Russia through the geopolitical tumult at the end of the Cold War, German unification and Soviet dissolution, as well as changes in the German government coalitions and chancellorship".

German Chancellors Helmut Kohl and Gerhard Schröder during their governance maintained a good good personal relationships with Russian leaders in particular. Germany accordingly came to be recognized as Russia's strategic partner or even Russia's advocate in Europe. According to TUOMAS FORSBERG, the key principles of Ostpolitik seemed to remain intact when Angela Merkel of the Christian Democrats became federal chancellor in 2005. There were many who believed that Merkel's relationship with Moscow was going to be less friendly. "However, while Merkel did not form a close personal relationship with President Putin, no major changes in Germany's policy towards Russia followed. Germany remained Russia's key partner

⁸¹ From Ostpolitik to 'frostpolitik'? Merkel, Putin and German foreign policy towards Russia
TUOMAS FORSBERG, page 21

in Europe, and a 'modernization partnership', designed to intensify cooperation in various fields, was formed when Dmitri Medvedev became president of Russia".⁸²

Under Merkel governance Germany's national and business interests remains stable and Germany's increasing energy dependency on Russia and the wider concerns for pan-European political order are the priorities which drive continuity in German foreign policy. Though it should be mentioned that German government was and continue to be critical towards Russia and Russia's behavior.

Already in 2014, during Ukraine crisis Merkel reacted strongly to Russia's military involvement. Immediately after the occupation of Crimea, Merkel made it clear that Russia had violated international law and that no partnership can work without a core set of shared values. Merkel tried to persuade Putin to cancel the referendum in Crimea, but after it she advocated more sanctions if Russia took further military action in Ukraine. But even in this case, German Chancellor noted that partnership with Russia would be continued.

It should be mentioned that the German media are often regarded as having a bias against Russia, but analysts who examined the content more systematically concluded that the news reports on Russia were mostly accurate and factual. (TUOMAS FORSBERG, page 35)

Once again it is important to emphasize that political relations between Germany and Russia were underpinned by growing economic interdependence. Since Soviet times, Germany was Moscow's biggest Western trade partner. This trend continues up until today despite mutual sanctions, while Germany still heavily relies on energy imports from Russia.⁸³

Franco-Russian relations are very different. France occupies only a minor position in Russia's foreign trade. France relies on nuclear power and is therefore much less dependent on Russia's main export commodities. "From a French perspective, political partnership between the two countries unfolded more on the international level, where France and Russia share a number of key features: both have a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, both are nuclear powers and consider themselves great powers in the international system, both have often taken issue with U.S. international hegemony. This created a certain bond and empathy in the French political elite and society for the grievances Russia increasingly voiced regarding Western, particularly U.S. and NATO, policy in its neighborhood and beyond"⁸⁴

Russian attitude towards France is positive. However, French view of Russia is not quite encouraging. In a 2013 BBC World Service poll, 25% of French people viewed Russia's influence

⁸² Ibid page 22

⁸³ The End of European Bilateralisms: Germany, France, and Russia, [online] <https://carnegie.ru/commentary/74950>

⁸⁴ The End of European Bilateralisms: Germany, France, and Russia, [online] <https://carnegie.ru/commentary/74950>

positively, with 63% expressing a negative view, while 49% of Russians viewed French influence positively, with 10% expressing a negative view.⁸⁵

Generally, France is known for its neutrality in world affairs and regional conflicts except in case when the US decided to intervene to Iraq.

In 2017, when Russian and French Presidents met in Paris, newly elected French President Emmanuel Macron expressed his displeasure and anger for Putin for his support for his opponent candidate in the French presidency poll which he won in a highly surprising manner. Putin in his turn, strongly defended his right to welcome Marine Le Pen in the Kremlin during the presidential race.⁸⁶

By the way, French foreign policy towards Russia is clear also in the period of Macron presidency. Though he appears to be broadly aligning his foreign policy with the U.S. priorities of tackling terrorism while seeking better ties with Russia, which he considers a long-term partner rather than a direct threat to Europe.⁸⁷

So, it is clear that both Germany and France value their relationship with Russia, though their involvement in anti-Russian resolutions and sanctions. In one hand, they value their national interests and good level of their cooperation, on the other hand, they are leading nations, who are pro-European or sometimes global values, which Russia often does not respect.

Theoretical explanation

As I mention in the introduction part as a theoretical framework I will use not a traditional IR theory, but "Enlargement and Integration Capacity" framework for analysis. This framework of analysis is introduced and developed by a Professor of European politics Frank Schimmelfennig, whose main research interests are in the theory of European integration, in particular, EU enlargement. Thus, I am going to use this framework for analysis and to adjust it to my thesis. The framework, which is developed by Schimmelfennig focuses on EU enlargement capacity, both internal (EU itself) and external (aspirant countries). Therefore, it is relevant to the thesis and gives opportunity to analyze the topic from this perspective. It will not be wrong to say, that NATO enlargement process is closely related to EU enlargement and very similar factors are important for both cases. Namely, similar factors turn out here as supporting (country's democratization level, inhabitants' willingness to defend mutually shared values and their support for the country's membership and etc.) or hindering (veto players in the countries).

⁸⁵ Contours of Russo-France relations, <http://foreignpolicynews.org>, [online] <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2017/06/17/contours-russo-france-relations/>

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ France's Macron puts national security at heart of foreign policy, [online] <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-foreign-analysis-idUSKBN19D20E>

The framework itself based on the EU policy debate on integration capacity, distinguishes internal and external integration capacity. Internal capacity denotes the preparedness of the EU to enlarge; external capacity refers to the preparedness of nonmembers to integrate with the EU. This is totally the same capacity, which works for Euro-Atlantic integration as well. Thus, for NATO enlargement we see that above mentioned capacities are primary, too. In one hand NATO's preparedness and readiness to enlarge and the preparedness of aspirant countries.

According to the framework, "the major components of internal integration capacity are policy-making capacity (decision-making capacity, implementation capacity, and financial stability), public support, and institutional reform; external integration capacity is based on democracy, good governance, economic capacity, regulatory alignment, and public support in the non member states. Both internal and external integration capacity are the major supply factors for enlargement, understood as a gradual process of horizontal integration".⁸⁸

The framework of analysis then theorizes the factors that effect internal and external integration capacity and their impact on enlargement. Veto players and weak state capabilities in their turn are the major domestic obstacles in the aspirant states. Internal integration capacity improves the EU's (in my case NATO's) ability to help non member countries prepare for closer integration. As for internal integration capacity, the paper analyze NATO's preparedness and readiness to enlarge. In this case, we see that NATO enlargement process was and is complicated, because every member state has its own vision about NATO enlargement. For instance, from very beginning France was against to NATO enlargement. Enlargement question was an issue for the Baltic states and now for Georgia and Ukraine as well. As for external integration capacity, the paper analyze Georgian and Ukrainian preparedness in all levels and all areas. As we mentioned, there are several criterias, which are substantial for membership. As the framework notes, the main attributes of external integration capacity are: democratic consolidation, governance capacity, economy and public opinion. Democratic consolidation means the rule of law, human rights, political and military reforms. Governance capacity includes inter alia, administrative capacity, the quality of public services and the level of corruption. Economy means that candidate countries are required to establish functioning market economies and ready themselves for participation in the internal market. Moreover, aspirant country's economy will be in a good level, as the country should spend 2% of GDP on defence.

And the last is public opinion. Aspirant country's society should highly support its country's choice.

⁸⁸ Schimmelfennig, Frank. "Enlargement and Integration Capacity, a Framework for Analysis", No. 1 | February 2014

As you see this framework, which established for the EU enlargement fully match with NATO enlargement. So, my attempt to adjust this framework to my thesis hopefully has success.

Conclusion

Alliance's founding document states that NATO membership is open to any "European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area". NATO's "open door policy" was reaffirmed at the January 1994 Brussels Summit, where NATO leaders stated that "We expect and would welcome NATO expansion that would reach to democratic states to our East." Thus, during this almost 3 decades NATO enlargement process has not stopped and new countries have appeared under NATO umbrella. However, enlargement towards Georgia and Ukraine — countries with Soviet past, remains problematic. Several NATO member countries, such as Germany and France opposed these countries membership. In the introduction part was mentioned that the question of the thesis is the following: **"Which factors influence German and French blocking positions towards NATO enlargement of Ukraine and Georgia?"**. According to the conducted research, we see that the main factor, that indirectly influences the countries' position is Russia and its cooperation with Germany and France. It is greatly seen particularly in German case. Germany is highly dependent on Russian gas, and values their energy and economic cooperation with Russia. Since Soviet times, Germany was Moscow's biggest Western trade partner. This trend continues up until today despite mutual sanctions, while Germany still heavily relies on energy imports from Russia. French case is not the same, but France and Russia also have economic cooperation, but in this case political partnership mainly matters. According to our study, from a French perspective, France and Russia share a number of key features: "both have a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, both are nuclear powers and consider themselves great powers in the international system, both have often taken issue with U.S. international hegemony". In spite of that, that Germany and France are Russia's core partners in the Europe, they are not hesitate to join in anti-Russian sanctions or initiate them themselves. It can be seen in Ukrainian case, when German Chancellor Angela Merkel tried to persuade Putin to cancel the referendum in Crimea, but after it she advocated more sanctions if Russia took further military action in Ukraine. It is important to mention, that during Georgian and Ukrainian cases Germany and France tried to act as a mediators for conflicts peaceful resolution. Even so, both countries everytime make it clear that their partnership with Russia is not going to be changed. Furthermore, NATO has no say "what Europe's relations with Russia should be". According to France and Germany, Russia is not "an adversary, not a threat", so it is important not to antagonize Russia with Georgian and Ukrainian cases. So, Germany and France, and several countries behind them say no to Georgian and Ukrainian possible membership, but for the first, no to granting MAP. As mentioned in the introduction part, the thesis also has 2 sub-questions:

•Why Germany and France block Ukraine and Georgia in NATO enlargement summits? No for what?

•Why good bilateral cooperation does not matter in the framework of NATO membership?

As for the first one, the conducted research argues, that Germany and France block Ukraine and Georgia for their national interests (energy cooperation, political partnership) with Russia. But they say no to these countries for several reasons, too. For instance, according to NATO enlargement study, which is a guideline for aspirant countries, aspirant country should meet several important standards of NATO for membership. So it is easy for Germany and France to mention those countries' not enough preparedness and postpone their membership issue for uncertain time. Regarding the criterias here is the list of them, which is necessary to implement for membership:

1. building a stable democratic political system that will fulfill the mutually shared values that the Alliance proclaims,
2. ensuring democratization of civil military relations,
3. inhabitants' willingness to defend mutually shared values and their support for the country's accession to the Alliance,
4. a positive attitude of the inhabitants of the particular country to their army,
5. The country's ability to ensure a certain degree of security by their own means and contribute to the strengthening of international security,
6. ensuring the ability of cooperation of the new members with the Alliance structures,
7. resolving all disagreements with neighbors and intensifying integration tendencies.

Both Georgia and Ukraine has problems with fulfillment of those criterias. For instance, both has territorial conflicts with their neighbor Russia. Ukraine has problems with public opinion about NATO membership. Though since 2008 public support has increased, but anyway, it is not enough yet. In this case, Georgian society mainly support its country's Euro-Atlantic aspiration. NATO members, time to time mention also, that Ukraine, for example, has a low ability to ensure a certain degree of security by its own means. For this aim, in 2016 Ukraine got a Comprehensive Assistance Package, which aims to help Ukraine strengthen its defences by building stronger security structures. Countries also need to contribute to the strengthening of international security. For this, Ukraine and Georgia very often participate in multinational military exercises, including NATO drills. Participation of peacekeeping missions is also important, as your country defend international security. Though, it is worth to mention, that Georgia has privilege in this case: It has very active representative participation in peacekeeping missions, has ability to ensure in some level its own security and etc. The main problem in this

case is Georgia's Air defence problem, which is going to partly resolve with 2 important agreements, which were signed in France in 2015.

However, as research shows Georgia's implementation of necessary reforms and preparation overall highly differs from the Ukrainian. Georgia is and was performing much better than Ukraine, but it was still part of the same policy package. So Georgia need to work as hard as it worked and wait when the doors of NATO will be opened.

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