



Interdisziplinäres
Forschungszentrum
Ostseeraum
Interdisciplinary Centre for
Baltic Sea Region Research



UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA
FACULTY OF
SOCIAL SCIENCES



Kontaktbüro Hochschulen
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern



Embassy
of the Federal Republic of Germany
Riga

Workshop
Riga, Latvia
April 25, 2024

20 years under the NATO umbrella: Baltic challenges, achievements, and the road ahead

April 2024 marks the 20th anniversary of Baltic NATO membership. This symbolic milestone offers an opportunity to take stock of the Baltic security landscape and discuss what has been achieved over the last two decades and what challenges still lie ahead. Russia's war in Ukraine has upended the once hopeful vision of the Baltics as a tension-free geopolitical space, thus giving way to confrontational and escalatory dynamics. The previous NATO tripwire logic, with a modest multinational force presence, is no longer viewed as sufficient. Instead of placing faith in the policy of military reinforcement, the Baltic states are now actively calling for a robust allied presence on the ground. In light of this, the Riga workshop, by gathering lead scholars and practitioners, seeks to tackle the following key questions: What are the baseline requirements for credible deterrence on NATO's eastern flank? Are the Baltic states ready to accommodate a brigade-size allied presence? What is the role of women within small-state armed forces such as the Baltics and how have they fared in implementing NATO's Women, Peace, and Security agenda? The event, consisting of two scholarly panels and a policy roundtable, will be of interest to policy practitioners, international relations students, and the broader audience.

Location: University of Latvia, House of Science, Beta/Gamma Auditorium. Jelgavas iela 3, Riga (Google map available [here](#))

Welcoming Remarks 10:30 - 10:40

Panel I 10:40 - 12:10

NATO's forward military presence in the Baltics

Moderator:

Andris Banka (University of Greifswald, Germany)

Speakers:

Brian Blankenship (University of Miami, United States)

Maria Mälksoo (University of Copenhagen, Denmark)

Toms Rostoks (University of Latvia, Latvia)

Canadian military/diplomatic representative (TBC)

Coffee Break 12:10 - 12:30

Panel II 12:30 - 14:00

Women, defence and security in the Baltics and beyond

Moderator:

Evija Djatkovica (Center for Geopolitical Studies Riga, Latvia)

Speakers:

Katharine A. M. Wright (Newcastle University, United Kingdom)

Lolita Čigāne (Center for Geopolitical Studies Riga, Latvia)

Tiiia-Triin Truusa (Baltic Defence College, Estonia)*

Coffee and Brunch

14:00 – 15:30

Transfer to the German Embassy in Riga

15:30 – 16:00

Location: Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany Riga, Raiņa bulvāris 13 (Google map available [here](#))

Policy roundtable 16:00 - 17:30 (by invitation)

20 years under the NATO umbrella

Moderator:

Margit Bussmann (University of Greifswald, Germany)

Speakers:

Margarita Šešelgytė (Vilnius University, Lithuania)*

Kristi Raik (The International Centre for Defence and Security, Estonia)

Christian Heldt (Ambassador of Germany to Latvia)

Reception at the German Embassy in Riga

17:30