

P ublic information policy on NATO

Public support to Latvia's membership in NATO - 68.5%

A number of public opinion polls are conducted annually to gauge the public view on Latvia's membership in NATO. The last survey conducted by the public opinion research company "Latvijas fakti" in December 2002 shows that nearly two thirds of Latvia's population support Latvia's accession to NATO and that support is steadily growing.

Support to NATO, December 2002:

- 68.5% - FOR
- 26.0% - AGAINST
- 5.5% - NO OPINION

Post-invitation public information policy aimed at explaining Latvia's obligations as a future NATO member

Before the Prague Summit public information policy was based on explaining why Latvia should join the Alliance and what Latvia would gain as a member of NATO. Moreover, a particular focus was put on explaining the essence of the Alliance (what is NATO; what are its members, etc). After Latvia was officially invited to join NATO the aim of the public information policy has been revised.

The multidimensional character of Latvia's membership and the necessity to talk about Latvia's contribution to NATO determine that the new main goal of the information policy is to clarify what will be Latvia's obligations and commitments after joining NATO. This aim is a keystone of Latvia's latest Public Information Policy Strategy. However, solid attention, if needed, still is paid to informing Latvian population on the basic issues regarding Latvia's membership in NATO.

Latvian public information policy is based on a mutual dialogue between the government and society

The mutual dialogue with Latvian society is specially encouraged in order to provide unbiased, overall, easily comprehensible information to any inhabitant of Latvia on NATO related issues with the aim of having a better-informed Latvian society on the issue and to make NATO membership a friendlier and easier topic.

Our intention is to promote a permanent discussion on Latvia's membership in NATO among all segments of Latvian society.

Teachers and the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs discussing the topical foreign affairs issues
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