European Public Perceptions of the Atlantic Alliance: Implications for Post-Cold War Security Policy

by

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This study examines European public opinion toward security issues. It questions the extent to which attitudes have changed in Great Britain, Germany, and France since the Cold War. The study also explores current perceptions in the East European countries of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

The research employs secondary analysis of published sources and original analysis of the *Euro-Barometer 35* survey. The research design is empirical, comparative, and longitudinal.

Findings suggest support for NATO has increased since the Cold War in West Europe. Confidence in the United States as the Alliance leader is currently high. Also, the Wes European public generally supports the expansion of NATO eastward to admit Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Little evidence is found for a younger generation hostile to western security arrangements. Partisan differences, however, are significant with politica parties on the left of the political spectrum noticeably less supportive of these security issues than parties on the right. Overall, the study finds the West European public continuing to define its security interests within the structure of the Atlantic Alliance.

The East European publics examined favor NATO membership and view the U.S. favorably; however, the research finds this support as limited and shallow. East Europeans show little enthusiasm to shoulder the specific responsibilities that inevitably will accompany NATO membership.

Thus, as new challenges confront the venerable Atlantic Alliance in the future, policy makers can rely on a deep reservoir of public support in West Europe. However, confidence building measures may be needed in the prospective new members to the East.

I. INTRODUCTION

Europe's strategic landscape has changed dramatically since the Cold War. An extraordinary series of events unfolded in the 1990s -- German unification, the peacefu division of Czechoslovakia, European involvement in the Persian Gulf War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, French renewed participation in NATO's military organization, war and NATO intervention in the Balkans, elections and attempted coups i Russia, war in Chechnya, and growing momentum toward expanding NATO into Eastern Europe.

The role played by the Atlantic Alliance was fundamental in bringing about the end of the Cold War. By maintaining a strategic balance of power in Europe, NATO guaranteed the security, freedom, and independence of its members and promoted the growth of democratic values and institutions. The Alliance created the stability which was a precondition for ending the adversarial relationship between East and West.

Having come so far, Europeans now face an uncertain future. The debate over NATO's expansion illustrates the concern over the future. Russian leaders are adamant in their opposition to NATO's expansion, which they view as a direct threat to Russia's vital interests. This is the only issue that unites the contentious factions in Russian politics. However, potential troubles are not limited to Russia. "The Balkans disaster is a grim reminder of the historical forces that can be brought back to life if not kept under control" (Kugler 1996, 12). Other ethnic and national conflicts could erupt in several places, such as Albania, where

violence against the government erupted in 1997, and Kosovo, where civil war threatened in 1998.

The extent to which the new geopolitical environment has reshaped European attitudes toward national security policy is unclear. This paper first outlines the debate over European post-Cold War security policy, and then it presents a theoretical discussion of public opinion and foreign policy. Next, this research examines the extent to which the end of the Cold War influenced public opinion in Europe. The general research question is: How does the European public define its post-Cold War security interests? Specifically, how does this public view the Atlantic Alliance, the United States, and NATO expansion? Related questions seek to measure the influence of generational politics and partisanship on security opinion. Finally, the implications for post-Cold War security policy are explored.

II. THE POST-COLD WAR SECURITY DEBATE

Since the collapse of the Soviet empire, NATO allies have faced the challenge of designing a new security system for Europe. Richard Kugler, of RAND, calls this "creating a stable European security architecture" (1996, xiii). One option, not seriously considered, is t disband the Alliance altogether because of the absence of any Soviet or Russian threat. At the other extreme, "another option would have been to fling NATO's doors wide open, admitting every nation that wants to join" (Albright 1998, 56). This option is also not seriously considered. Instead, the debate has focused on more intermediate issues; such as, the new "ou of area" missions in the Balkans, and more importantly, the planned expansion to admit new members from East Europe.

The fundamental issue framing the debate over the future European security architecture is NATO expansion. How and why the Alliance works out this matter will set policy for decades. Policy makers, scholars, and pundits have debated the pros and cons of NATO expansi exhaustively since the fall of the Soviet Union. The issues do not divide along familiar lines. "Like many post-Cold War foreign policy initiatives, NATO enlargement has scrambled traditional partisan and ideological blocs" (Rosner 1996, 9). Typically, debates in international relations are informed by the views of *realists* and *globalists*. However, adherents of these two schools of thought find themselves on both sides of the question of NATO expansion.

The realist outlook rests on the proposition that states naturally pursue power and those who neglect to cultivate power may invite war. In this view, alliances impose a certain balance of power among opposing states and act to constrain the competition among states. Throughout the Cold War, realism was the prevalent school of thought in international relations, as reflected by the leading work of the period, Hans J. Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, first published in 1948. In it, Morgenthau asserts: "International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power" (1973, 27). The outbreak o World War II was attributed to the appeasement of aggression and the military weakness o the allies. Thus, in the postwar period the realist prescription of meeting threats with strength was followed, and this approach continues to influence theorists and policy makers today.

According to the globalist model, the present international system differs sharply from the one that existed prior to World War II and during the Cold War. Globalists believe the emergence of interdependence is leading to a "shrinking of the world" and they view "the proliferation of international organizations as a significant development in world politics"

(Maghroori 1982, 16-17). In this view, advancements in communications, transportation, and military technology, along with the global spread of democracy and international cooperation, have changed the nature of world politics. Globalists also point out the rise of new issues challenging the community of nations, such as the environment, population, and a global economy. Accordingly, they view the realist paradigm as outmoded, and they look to policies and structures that promote democracy and cooperation to best provide stability and security.

An interesting aspect of the post-Cold War security debate is that realist and globalis arguments are used both to support and to oppose NATO expansion. *Realist*s who support expansion emphasize the power vacuum left in Eastern Europe by the collapse of the Sovie Union, and they see a need to establish a new balance of power through the expansion o NATO. *Globalists* who support expansion stress the importance of democratic and economic reforms in Eastern Europe, and they view NATO expansion as a way to foster these advancements and thereby provide for stability and security in Europe. Opponents of expansion who are *realists* point out the security dilemma created when defensive measures appear threatening to others. In this view, NATO expansion may in fact precipitate the Russian actions it is intended to deter. Another concern of realists is the military burden of defending the geographic discontinuities expansion will bring. Additionally, they reject any concern over promoting democratic reforms. *Globalists* who oppose the expansion of NATO prefer a broader, European-wide security arrangement that does not create a new dividing line in Europe and that does not leave some nations on the outside of the new order. Thus, the issues and positions are complex. In the sections that follow, this debate will be more thoroughly examined.

Proponents of NATO Expansion

"The Soviet collapse has left behind significant and unbalanced military forces and weapons inventories among nations experiencing a wave of instability and conflict generated by virulent nationalism" (Asmus, et al, 1993). Thi *realist* view sees NATO expansion into Eastern Europe as necessary for "preventing this region from sliding into a geopolitical instability tha could endanger all of Europe" (Kugler 1996, xvii). Geopolitics and balance of power are the areas of chief concern for realists. A return of Russian imperialism and an eastward-looking Germany would eventually clash if the power vacuum in Eastern Europe is not filled by the West. To the realists, bringing Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO w provide security and stability by correcting Europe's current balance-of-power difficulties with a new security system.

Henry Kissinger, former U.S. Secretary of State, advances the realist perspective in his article "Expand NATO Now." In it he states, "failure to expand NATO in the near future is likely to prove irrevocable. Russian opposition is bound to grow as its economy gains strength; the nations of Central Europe may drift out of their association with Europe. The end result would be a vacuum between Germany and Russia that has tempted so many previous conflicts" (1994, 27). Kissinger points out that the issue of NATO expansion arose initially with the prospective new members asking for admittance. In his view this reflects the geopolitica concerns of these countries, situated precariously between Germany and Russia. Kissinger says that "if this request is rejected and the states bordering Germany are refused protection, Germany will sooner or later seek to achieve its security by national efforts, encountering on the way a Russia pursuing the same policy from its own side" (1994, 27).

Madeleine Albright, current U.S. Secretary of State, emphasizes the deterrent nature o alliances. In her view, extending NATO's defensive guarantee eastward will maintain the balance in Europe.

> A larger NATO will make us safer by expanding the area in Europe where wars simply do not happen. In this century, more than 5 million Americans have been called to fight in Europe. But we have never had to fire a shot to defend a NATO ally. By making it clear that we will fight, if necessary, to defend Paris or London or Warsaw or Prague, we make it less likely that our troops will ever have to do so. (Albright 1998, 58)

Christoph Bertram, former Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, focuses on the role NATO plays in maintaining stability in Europe. In his view, NATO expansion is key to continuing this role. This reflects the realist concern with geopolitical balance. In his book, *Europe in the Balance: Securing the Peace Won in the Cold War*, he states, "NATO has to develop a strategy for projecting stability beyond its present membership that will not be limited to, but has to include new members from Eastern Europe" (1995, 99).

Also supporting NATO expansion are *globalists* who articulate an entirely different set of arguments. In their view expansion is a way to further democratic and economic reforms in Eastern Europe. By entangling East European countries more with the West through international organizations, such as NATO and the European Union, political and economic reforms will continue to move forward, thus providing stability and security. This view sees "democratization" and "reform" as the new priorities for NATO as it expands to the east.

Richard Holbroke, former Assistant U.S. Secretary of State, writing of the history o conflict in Central Europe, reflects the globalist concern with democracy by stating that "without democracy, stability, and free-market economies, these lands remain vulnerable to the

same problems . . . Expansion of NATO is a logical and essential consequence of the disappearance of the Iron Curtain and the need to widen European unity based on shared democratic values" (1995, 41-42).

Kurt Kaiser, Director of the Research Institute of the German Society for Foreign Affairs in Bonn, echoes this globalist view of NATO expansion and democratization. "The success o democratization in Central and East European countries would significantly advance security in Europe and in Russia also . . . Contributing to democratization wherever possible is therefore another new alliance task" (1996, 131). He is asserting that NATO assume democratization as a specific Alliance function or objective.

Former U.S. National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, believes NATO expansi benefits Europe, the European-American relationship, and ultimately the relationship between Europe and Russia. "It consolidates a region of greater political and, especially, democratic stability" (1997, 28). Again, the emphasis is on democratization.

The globalist perspective is reflected in a NATO Factsheet distributed in March 1996, titled "NATO's Enlargement." In addressing reasons why NATO will enlarge, the paper asserts enlargement will contribute to enhanced security and stability by "encouraging and supporting democratic reforms, including civilian and democratic control over the military; fostering patterns and habits of cooperation, consultation, and consensus building . . . promoting good neighborly relations in the whole Euro-Atlantic area . . . [and] reinforcing the tendenc toward integration and cooperation in Europe" (1996, 2). Clearly, the Alliance has to some extent already accepted this role of promoting democracy and political reforms in Europe.

Thus, arguments reflecting the views of realists and globalists combine to promote NATO expansion. However, these two schools of thought also provide rationales for opposing expansion.

Opponents of NATO Expansion

One *realist* objection to NATO expansion is that it is unnecessary because the Alliance is no longer threatened. "If the Russian army is no longer a threat, why should NATO expand to the east to include the Visegrad four?" (Summers 1996). In this view expansion may actually bring about threatening reactions from Russia. George Kennan, architect of the postwar polic of "containment," opposes expansion for these reasons. He says, "I'm strongly against the idea of expanding NATO up to the Russian frontiers. This is the one thing I can think of that would really stir up a truly troublesome nationalistic, military reaction in Russia" (Trimble 1996, 41). Kennan has also stated that expanding NATO would be "the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-Cold War era" (Burns 1997).

Concerns over reactions from Russia reflect problems associated with the "security dilemma." According to this theoretical construct, states perceive the external environment is threatening their security, so they react defensively, enhancing their power in many differen ways, such as increasing military forces or forming or expanding alliances. In such an environment it does not take much for one state or alliance to arouse the suspicions of another and to "stimulate reciprocal images of hostility that each finds easy to substantiate by its opponent's behavior" (Spanier and Hook 1998, 6). By focusing only on the military threat and the original intent of the Alliance, this realist view sees no justification for expansion.

Another realist objection is based on the military requirements for an expanded NATO. Retired U.S. Army General Frederick J. Kroesen expresses concern for the geographic discontinuities NATO seems to be getting into. He observes how "the holes in the cheese" create military problems for NATO (1997, 7). Nonmember countries like Austria, Switzerland, and now Slovakia greatly complicate military planning. Atkeson, another retired U.S. Army General, points out that "Hungary will be an island, surrounded by nonaligned neighbors," and he calls this a "serious case of military incoherence on the Continent" (1997, 20). This view emphasizes the dangers associated with an Alliance that is not militarily defensible.

Realists also discount the importance of spreading democracy or economic reforms as reasons for expansion. "NATO is not an effective instrument for promoting either free markets or democracy" (Mandelbaum 1995, 9). Expansion may make good political or social sense, bu the military realities should override these other goals. "It appears that geopolitica considerations are either being overlooked or are assuming less importance in the scheme o things" (Atkeson 1997, 20).

Some *Globalists* oppose NATO expansion also. Their arguments oppose expansion because it may hinder broader, internationalist objectives. This view favors a larger goal, that of constructing a European-wide security framework that includes Russia. This view opposes expanding NATO because it might antagonize Russia, which could obstruct the wider objective of a pan-European defense arrangement. Jonathan Dean, a former U.S. arms contro ambassador, writes: "The main security task of the United States and the nations of Western Europe is to define a place for Russia and the East European states in a comprehensive

European security structure" (1996, 18). So, an expanded NATO would be insufficient and possible detrimental to the goal of a European-wide security structure.

The assumption that Europe is transitioning into a fundamentally new type of state system lies at the heart of the globalist perspective. Citing the arms control accords covering nuclear and conventional weapons to which Russia has agreed, Michael Mandlebaum writes: "Together these arrangements form an arrangement that Europe has never had, a common security order based not on the age-old balance of power but rather on consensus and cooperation" (1995,12). Sir John Killick, a former UK Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Permanent Representative to NATO, opposes expansion because: "The advocates o enlargement base their case on the proposition that there is a 'security void' to the East and that it must be filled -- by NATO, if it is not going to be filled by Russia and Germany. This strikes me as very out-of-date, Cold War-style thinking" (1996, 60). In Killick's view, Europe has moved beyond the age of balance of power politics and has entered into another era, in which NATO expansion is either unnecessary or dangerous.

Another aspect of the globalist position is that an expanded NATO continues to divide Europe. Killick refers to this as the "new dividing line in Europe" (1996,60). Any such division hinders broader, more comprehensive solutions. Sherle Schwenninger, a senior fellow of the World Policy Institute at the New School for Social Research, outlines the potential for economic divisions in Europe resulting from NATO expansion. He believes NATO expansion will move the dividing line in Europe eastward. Schwenninger outlines several other areas o division that may occur as a result of expansion: divisions between rich and poor; divisions between more advanced and less advanced economies; and divisions between nations that are

included in NATO and those that are not. According to Schwenninger: "For example, as a result of NATO expansion, the countries excluded will be put at an even greater disadvantage in attracting sizeable Western investment, further slowing their economic progress and increasing the gap that already exists between the better-off prospective Central European members of NATO and their neighbors to the east" (1997, 26).

As mentioned previously, globalists favor efforts to advance democracy. But, NATO expansion in the view of some globalists does not do that. "NATO membership is unnecessar to bolster democracy in Poland, Hungary, or the Czech Republic, all of which already have impeccable democratic credentials. Other former communist countries, where democracy and market economies are far shakier, are not being invited" (Mandlebaum 1998, 57). In other words, in this globalist view, the planned expansion of NATO will actually hinder democratization and economic reform in those countries that are in need of it the most.

Conclusion

It should be remembered that NATO has expanded before. Since its original 12 members formed the Alliance in 1949, four new members have been added: Greece and Turkey in 1952, West Germany in 1955, and Spain in 1982. Each accession improved the geopolitical, strategic posture of the Alliance, but these expansions promoted other goals as well. NATO membership helped to ameliorate the ancient conflict between Greece and Turkey, though no end it. The accession of the Federal Republic of Germany bound Germany closely to the Western powers, so it could no longer play off East against West and upset the military and

political balance of Europe (Roth 1967). Spain's membership recognized and strengthened its new democratic institutions following Franco's death ("Spain" 1982).

Thus, the issues framed by the realist and globalist perspectives are not new, nor will the be settled soon. However, as policy makers debate these issues, public opinion is another significant element of European security. The extent to which the European public is engaged in this debate is examined next.

III. THEORY, PUBLIC OPINION, AND FOREIGN POLICY

Normative democratic theory contends that the public should play a significant part in deciding public policy. Yet, scholars assessing the extent of public influence over foreign polic have not always supported this theoretical perspective. Over the past 50 years, various schools of thought have evolved from one in which the public has no impact on foreign policy, to a second in which the public has some impact, and finally to the current view that the public has a direct impact on foreign policy decision making. This section briefly reviews these three schools of thought.

Early studies on public opinion discount the public's ability to exert any influence over foreign policy decisions. Almond (1950) and Rosenau (1961) reach essentially the same conclusions that the public is uninformed, indifferent, and permissive on foreign policy issues. In their view, foreign policy attitudes are volatile and lack coherence and structure. Klingberg (1952) argues that public opinion shifts back and forth between various moods or cycles. Thomas W. Graham describes this first school of thought as the "now discredited, elitist paradigm" in which public opinion is "volatile or moody, unstructured and poorly informed,

and changed through a top-down process, and not particularly significant to decision making" (1994, 190).

A second view believes public opinion constrains or limits foreign policy. V.O. Key (1961) describes public opinion as a "system of dikes" that channel policy choices into a few allowable directions. According to this school of thought, the public does not influence specific policies, but instead sets the boundaries of acceptable action. The public may not dictate specific policies, but instead, "it establishes the outer limits of acceptable government action, bulwarks marking the margins of public tolerance" (LeoGrande 1993, 171). In many cases, "this constraint is usually the most that policy makers themselves will concede in addressing the influence of public opinion on foreign policy" (Shapiro and Page 1994, 229).

A third and prevailing school of thought insists that public opinion impacts significantly on the making of foreign policy (Hinckley 1992; Page and Shapiro 1992). Public opinion does more than constrain policymaking, it also exerts influence over specific policy alternatives. "Public opinion has also been able to move government policies in different directions -- in ways exceeding simple constraints" (Shapiro and Page 1994, 229). Graham refers to this view as a "new paradigm" which views public opinion as having a major impact on national security decision making (1994, 195). Everett Ladd voices perhaps the most sanguine conclusion: public opinion on foreign policy contains "deep underlying values and assessments, which almost invariably in the last analysis have been respected in the implemented policy" (1993, ix).

Observers of European politics have long asserted the importance of public opinion on foreign policy making (Bertram, 1983; Flynn and Rattinger, 1985; and Inglehart, 1984). The early 1980s was a period of intense research into European public opinion because of the

heated debate over NATO's planned European deployment of a new generation of nuclear weapons (Haseler 1983; Russett and DeLuca 1983; and Schneider 1983). Eichenberg notes that European "*security specialists* routinely base their arguments on the presumed state of public opinion" (emphasis in the original; 1989, 1).

Though critical, public opinion is but one influence directing where Europe is headed. Policy makers both follow and shape public opinion. For many reasons, "public opinion trends should not necessarily be viewed prescriptively, but rather as a barometer of public sentiment that define the challenges that elected political leaders in Western democracies must confront" (Asmus 1994, 3). Thus, the intent of this paper is to examine public opinion, not prescribe or predict the future course of European security affairs.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was designed to answer four questions about European public opinion since the Cold War. First, to what extent has support for NATO increased or decreased? Second, to what extent has opinion toward the United States and its role in Europe's security changed Third, does the European public support NATO expanding to the east? And fourth, to wha extent are foreign policy attitudes affected by age and political party identification

This research relied on a secondary analysis of survey data. Most findings are from variety of published sources. The *Euro-Barometer 35* survey provided the opportunity for dat manipulation and statistical analyses for the questions on age and party. The Euro-Barometers are a semiannual series of sample surveys administered in Europe. Usually, they contain few if

any items on foreign policy *Euro-Barometer 35*, administered in 1991, contained some survey questions useful for this study. SPSS was used for the analysis o *Euro-Barometer 35*.

The countries in West Europe selected were Great Britain, Germany, and France. Data on these three were available in most sources for most periods. This allowed for consistent time series analysis. Isolated findings on countries such as Italy, the Netherlands, and others were omitted. The countries selected in East Europe were Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

The original surveys cited by the sources were all administered by prominent and respected organizations. Findings are based on national probability samples of approximately 1000 respondents for each country.

Findings are presented in three formats. Enumerative tables summarize the responses fro the three countries on several questions. Line diagrams display time series data when available. Contingency tables test for the presence of significant differences among age groups or political parties.

V. FINDINGS

Support For NATO

Since the Cold War, predictions of the end of NATO have been common. Some observers expected political and public support for NATO to decrease after the breakup of the Sovie Union. The *Economist* wrote in 1991, "with the Cold War over, a lot of Europeans wonder whether they still need a NATO" (USIA 1995, 4). Owen Harries (1993) even predicted the collapse of the West as a political and military entity.

Table 1

Support For NATO: 1976-1996
Percent Responding NATO is Still Essential

	Britain	W. German	France
1976	69	85	42
1977	73	79	44
1978	70	84	39
1980	78	87	43
1981	70	62	---
1982	65	66	34
1983	---	86	---
1984	76	87	---
1985	76	---	---
1987	72	70	48
1988	---	76	---
1990	---	53	---
1991	72	64	56
1992	---	71	---
1993	---	72	---
1994	---	---	58
1995	69	58*	60
1996	71	69*	54

* Percentages for 1995 and 1996 include respondents from the former East Germany. Measured separately, East Germans have lower support for NATO than West Germans, although support among those in the East is increasing.

QUESTION: "Some people say that NATO is still essential to our country's security. Others say NATO is no longer essential to our country's security. Which view is closer to your own?"

NOTES: The identical question was asked for each time period. Data not available where indicated with dashes. N=1000 (approximately) for each national sample for each year.

SOURCES: Eichenberg (1989, 124) for 1976-1978 and 1981-1987; *Euro-Barometer 14* for 1980; *Euro-Barometer 35* for 1991; Asmus (1994, 32) for 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1993; USIA (1994, 1) for 1994; USIA (1995, 4) for 1995, and USIA (1996, 5) for 1995.

Others, however, advocate a broader role for NATO now that the Soviet threat has disappeared. William Pfaff (1993) claims "NATO is the true Great Power in Europe today," and he advocated NATO guaranteeing by force the political frontiers of all of Eastern, East-Central, and Balkan Europe. Asmus, et al, (1993) see NATO as the tool with which "the West" can reorganize itself to deal with the conflicts and instability of the post-Cold War system. Perhaps, as Bailes believes, "reports of NATO's demise are as premature as ever" (1997, 15).

As the data in Table 1 show, support for NATO remains high. No evidence suggests the West European public wants to abandon NATO. In 1996, majorities in Britain (71%), Germany (69%), and France (54%) think NATO is still essential to their security. Figure 1 portrays the same data in a line diagram format.

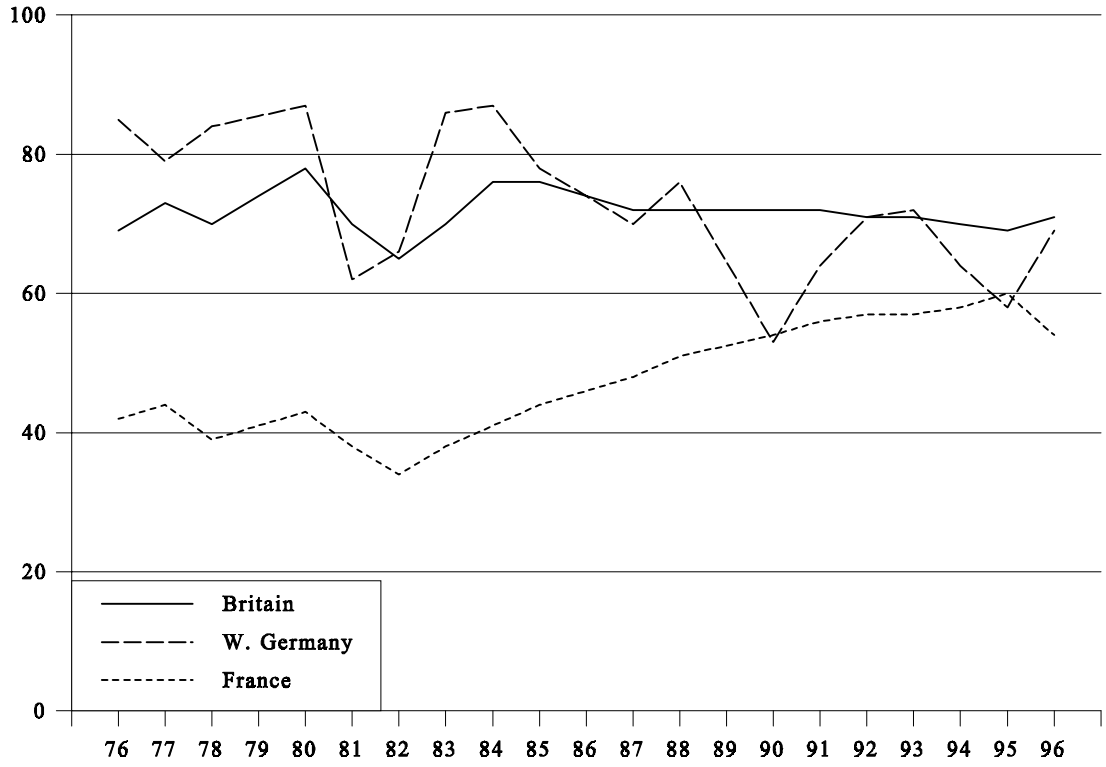
These trends suggest long-term, deeply-held support for NATO. In Britain, large percentages of opinion consistently viewed NATO as essential. British support remained withi a very narrow band of variation between a low of 65% and a high of 78%. In Britain, little evidence exists of volatility or mood swings on this issue. The British public and its government's foreign policy have been consistently Atlanticist

French support for NATO has increased steadily since 1982. Low levels of French suppor for NATO were common in the 1970s and early 1980s, due to the Gaullist tradition of French unilateralism. The higher levels of support in the 1990s suggest the Alliance has become much more well-known and accepted among the French public. Following almost 30 years o separation, France, in 1995, returned to NATO's integrated military command structure. Thus, since the end of the Cold War, France has moved closer to NATO both in terms of officia policy and public support.

Figure 1

Support For NATO: 1976-1996

Percent Responding NATO Still Essential



QUESTION: "Some people say that NATO is still essential to our country's security. Others say NATO is no longer essential to our country's security. Which view is closer to your own?"

NOTES: This figure presents the data from Table 1. Time periods are connected and smoothed where data are missing, such as 1982 to 1987 for France. For Germany, 1995 and 1996 include respondents from both West Germany and the former East Germany. N=1000 (approximately) for each national sample.

SOURCES: Eichenberg (1989, 124) for 1976-1978 and 1981-1987; *Euro-Barometer 14* for 1980; *Euro-Barometer 35* for 1991; Asmus (1994, 32) for 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1993; USIA (1994, 1) for 1994; USIA (1995, 4) for 1995, and USIA (1996, 5) for 1995.

German opinion has fluctuated most of the three countries. A large drop is evident during the early Reagan years, during which large protests demonstrated against NATO's plans to field the controversial Pershing II and cruise missile nuclear weapons systems. Another decline in German support occurred in 1990 (only 53% responded NATO was still essential). The

Berlin Wall had just come down and Germany was moving rapidly toward unification. During this remarkable period, NATO may have been seen as an obstacle to unification and Germany's foreign policy interests. Since unification, support for NATO has returned to its earlier levels.

Support for NATO is lower among East Germans than West Germans, although support is rising in both. The data for Germany in Table 1 and Figure 1 for 1995 and 1996 include respondents from both East and West Germany, which lowers the overall level of support. However, since German unification in 1990, support for NATO has risen among Germans i both regions as shown in Table 2 and Figure 2. The dip in support among East Germans in 1991 may parallel the 1990 dip among the West Germans. It may reflect the perception tha with the Soviet Union's demise, NATO's role would be diminished. Overall, the German public, in both the West and East, solidly supports NATO, and this support is increasing.

Table 2

German Support For NATO: 1990-1993
Percent Responding NATO is Still Essential

	West Germany	East German
1990	53	43
1991	64	35
1992	71	46
1994	72	52

QUESTION: "Some people say that NATO is still essential to our country's security. Others say NATO is no longer essential to our country's security. Which view is closer to your own?"

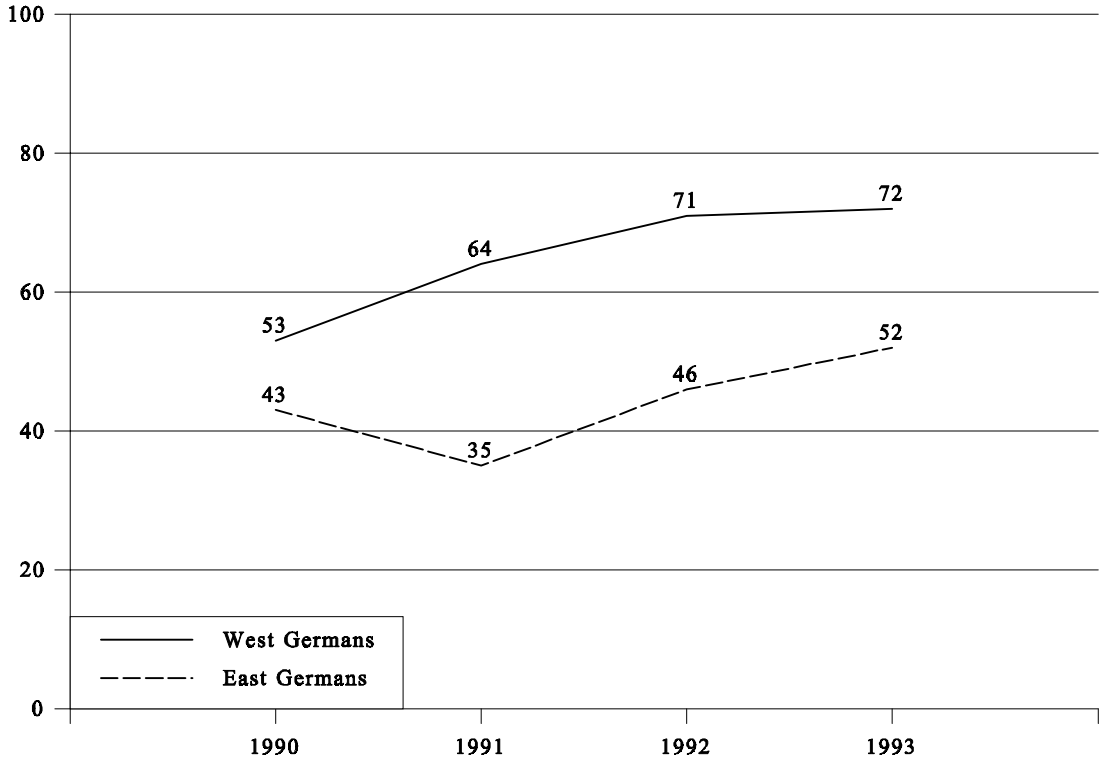
NOTES: N=1000 in both samples (approximately) for each year.

SOURCE: Asmus 1994, 32.

Figure 2

German Support For NATO: 1990-1993

Percent Responding NATO Still Essential



QUESTION: "Some people say that NATO is still essential to our country's security. Others say NATO is no longer essential to our country's security. Which view is closer to your own?"

NOTES: This figure presents the data in Table 2. N=1000 in both samples (approximately) for each year.

SOURCE: Asmus 1994, 32.

As these data indicate, West European public support for NATO has increased since the Cold War. Perhaps Europeans see a greater "real world" need for NATO now than before. The realities of ethnic conflict and regional instability to the east have replaced the traditional Cold War concerns about a Soviet threat, which for some time had become remote. Foreign policies are in transition, and West Europeans may see NATO as a familiar, reliable foundation upon which to ensure security in the future.

Support for the United States

As NATO moves closer to carrying out its plans to expand eastward, West European perceptions of the United States will be significant. The Alliance leader needs the support o the West European public.

In the early 1980s, a general erosion of esteem toward the United States occurred throughout West Europe. A tide of anti-Americanism and neutralism was spreading, as evidenced by large peace marches, protests, and the growing nuclear freeze movement. "Favorable images of the United States had outnumbered unfavorable images by as much as 80 percentage points in 1978, but by 1981 this figure had been cut in half or more in all countries except France, where the American rating has historically been low in any case" (Eichenberg 1989, 95).

Table 3

Confidence in the United States: 1961-1996
Percent Responding a Great Deal and a Fair Amount

	Britain	W. German	France
1961	53	79	---
1981	30	42	---
1991	77	76	67
1995	46	50*	39
1996	69	61*	58

* Percentages for 1995 and 1996 include respondents from the former East Germany.

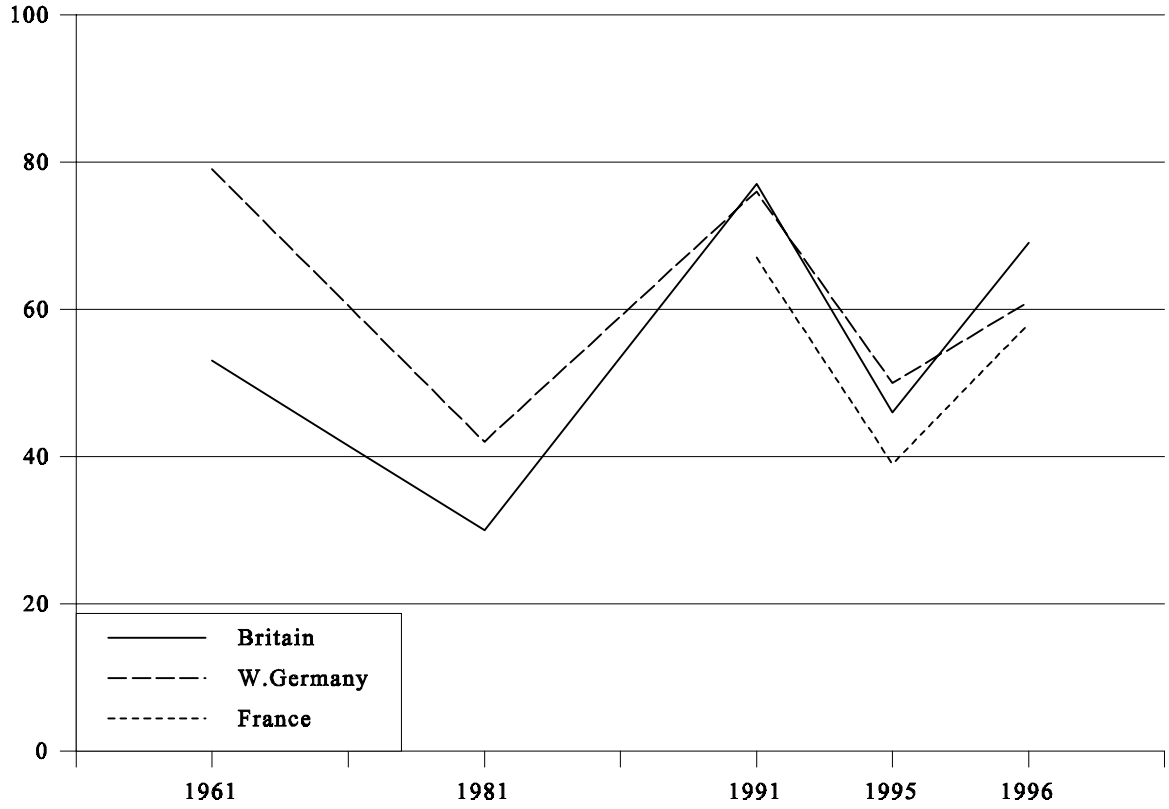
QUESTION: "How much confidence do you have in the United States to deal responsibly with world problems? Do you have a great deal of confidence, a fair amount of confidence, very little confidence, or no confidence at all?"

NOTES: The identical question was asked for each time period. Data not available where indicated with dashes. N=1000 (approximately) for each national sample for each time period.

SOURCES: Merritt and Puchala (1968, 259) for 1961; Noelle-Neumann (1981, 419-420) for Germany in 1981; Crewe (1984, 49) for Britain in 1981; *Euro-Barometer 35* for 1991; USIA (1996, 34) for 1995 and 1996.

Figure 3
Confidence in the U.S.: 1961-1996

Percent Responding a Great/Fair Amount



QUESTION: "How much confidence do you have in the United States to deal responsibly with world problems? Do you have a great deal of confidence, a fair amount of confidence, very little confidence, or no confidence at all?"

NOTES: X-axis is not to scale. This figure presents the data from Table 2. Time periods are connected where data are missing, such as between 1981 and 1991. For Germany, 1995 and 1996 include respondents from both West and East Germany. The identical item was administered for each time period. N=1000 (approximately) for each national sample for each time period.

SOURCES: Merritt and Puchala (1968, 259) for 1961; Noelle-Neumann (1981, 419-420) for German in 1981; Crewe (1984, 49) for Britain in 1981; *Euro-Barometer 35* for 1991; USIA (1996, 34) for 1995 and 1996.

By the 1990s, positive attitudes toward the United States had returned. As Table 3 indicates, large majorities displayed confidence in the United States to deal responsibly with world problems: 77% in Great Britain, 76% in West Germany, and 67% in France.

European confidence in the United States seemed to dampen a bit in 1995. This may have been the result of criticism in the European media "over the low priority that U.S.-European relations received during the Clinton Administration's first year" (Asmus 1994, 28). Uncertainty over European and American policy in Bosnia may have also contributed to the downturn. Initially, Bosnia was perceived as a "European" issue, and the hands off policy o the United States may have been viewed as vacillation or weakness by the West European public. The lack of agreement among the European powers on how to proceed in Bosnia left a vacuum the U.S. and NATO eventually had to fill. So, by 1996, European trust in U.S. foreign policy leadership bounced back, following American leadership in negotiating a settlement to the Bosnian conflict and NATO's role in IFOR. Together, these events may have bolstered European confidence in the United States. Additionally, in 1996, "West Europeans have as much or nearly as much confidence in the U.S. to deal responsibly with international issues as they have in their own countries" (USIA 1996, 34). Figure 3 displays these swings in European opinion of the United States.

A more specific issue is support for the U.S. military presence in Europe, which is presented in Table 4. When asked whether the United States military presence in Europe is necessary for the security of their country, wide differences exist on the "strongly agree" response. In Britain, 30% strongly agree that the U.S. military presence is necessary, but onl 18% in West Germany and 13% in France strongly agree. Combining the responses of strongly

agree and slightly agree produces majorities in Great Britain (63%) and West Germany (58%), but only 43% support in France. The fact that U.S. troops have not been stationed on French soil since 1966 probably influences French opinion on this issue. The data in Table 4 sugges support is not very deep or widespread on this issue, but with only the one time period a firm conclusion is not possible.

Thus, little evidence exists to support a possible rise in anti-Americanism. Opinion toward the United States among West Europeans seems unsteady, yet currently favorable. In fact, opinion toward the United States appears on the upswing. The large swings in confidence toward the U.S. in 1995 and 1996, as NATO's Bosnian policy was developed and debated, suggest the European public wants to see the U.S. engaged in Europe, but in a way that is balanced and respectful of European interests. European attitudes toward the United States will be crucial as NATO proceeds with its plans for expansion.

Table 4

Support For the U.S. Military Presence in Europe, 1991

	Britain	W. German	France
Strongly Agree	30%	18%	13%
Slightly Agree	33	40	30
Slightly Disagree	20	25	21
Strongly Disagree	14	11	28
Don't Know	3	5	8
TOTAL	100%	99%	100%
N	1054	1070	1000

QUESTION: "Please tell me whether you agree strongly, agree slightly, disagree slightly, or disagree strongly with this statement: the United States military presence in Europe is necessary for the security of (your country).

SOURCE: *Euro-Barometer 35*.

Support for NATO Expansion

Beyond this debate among elites, the West European public favors extending NATO membership to Eastern Europe. This support is stronger the more general the question i worded. When asked whether they support admitting Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, the average support in 1996 in Britain was 67%, in Germany 57%, and in France 64%. The volatility of the opinion displayed in Table 5 is interesting, especially considering the short time interval of one year. Support declined in Britain and Germany, but remained about the same in France. NATO expansion is still a new issue for the European public to consider, so the opinion is not as mature as on other issues.

Table 5

Support For NATO Expansion to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic
Percent Supporting Expansion

	Britai		Germany		France	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
Czech Rep.	64	65	60	54	58	62
Hungary	70	63	72	61	63	60
Poland	79	74	61	55	68	70
AVERAGE	71	67	64	57	63	64

QUESTION: "Keeping in mind that our country [in France: NATO members] must defend any NATO country that comes under attack, please tell me whether you would support or oppose admitting each of the following countries as members of NATO."

NOTES: N=1000 (approximately) for each national sample for each period.

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 21.

When asked how they would vote in a referendum to include these same countries, the level of support was lower: in Britain 63%, in Germany 48%, and in France 52% (see Table 6). The question on the referendum is more specific and requires respondents to identify with taking some action, even though a referendum is not required for NATO to expand. This type of question drives the level of support down. Another interesting finding is that support on both measures in 1996 is lowest in Germany, which is the closest to East Europe and Russia, and support is highest in Britain, which is the farthest away. This proximity factor coul become more significant as NATO proceeds with implementing its plans for expansion.

Table 6

Views on a Possible NATO Referendum to Include Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, 1996

	Britain	German	France
For	63%	48%	52%
Against	23	40	37
Don't Know	14	12	11
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
N	1010	1200	1002

QUESTION: "Keeping in mind that our country [in France: NATO members] must defend any NATO country that comes under attack, please tell me how you would vote if there were a referendum tomorrow on including Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in NATO. Would you vote for or against including Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in NATO if there were a referendum tomorrow?"

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 21.

Table 7

Support For NATO Expansion to Bulgaria and Romania
Percent Supporting Expansion

	Britai		Germany		France	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
Bulgaria	56	54	52	46	57	59
Romania	58	61	43	36	57	50
AVERAGE	57	58	48	41	57	55

QUESTION: "Keeping in mind that our country [in France: NATO members] must defend any NATO country that comes under attack, please tell me whether you would support or oppose admitting each of the following countries as members of NATO."

NOTES: N=1000 (approximately) for each national sample for each period.

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 22.

Table 8

Views on a Possible NATO Referendum to Include Bulgaria and Romania, 1996

	Britain	German	France
For	49%	32%	45%
Against	34	53	44
Don't Know	17	15	11
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
N	1010	1200	1002

QUESTION: "And what about Bulgaria and Romania, would you vote for or against including them in NATO i there were a referendum tomorrow?"

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 22.

NATO has invited Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to join first. The invitation was formally offered at the NATO summit in Madrid in July 1997. When asked whether other countries, specifically Bulgaria and Romania, should be admitted to NATO, West European opinion is less supportive as Table 7 indicates. According to Table 8, when asked about a referendum to admit these two countries, less than a majority favor it: Britain (49%), German (32%), and France (45%). Again, support is influenced by proximity.

Thus, West Europeans support the expansion of NATO, but with some conditions. They have preferences on which countries should be admitted at this time. Regarding Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, public support is substantial, but when asked about Bulgari and Romania, Europeans balk. Support declines when asked about a referendum, and Germany's level of support is the lowest. These observations indicate that opinion on this issue may be fragile, and policy makers should pay attention for shifts in this opinion in the future.

Generational Influences

Fundamental social and political changes have occurred throughout West Europe since the Second World War. Traditional power relationships and decision-making patterns have been altered by the spread of mass education, increased social mobility, generational conflict, a new agenda of political issues, and new forms of political participation (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Dalton, et al, 1984; Inglehart 1977; and Szabo 1983). This section examines the influences of generation on West European foreign policy opinion, and the next section looks at political party identification.

The political consequences of intergenerational attitude change are potentially dramatic. As childhood socialization experiences vary, so will adult political attitudes and behavior. According to Mannheim, political generations occupy "a common location in the social and historical process, predisposing them to a certain characteristic type of historically relevan action" (1952, 291).

An intense interest developed in the 1980s about the West European "Successor Generation" (Levi 1982; Laqueur 1985; and Szabo 1983). The concern was that this younger generation, born since World War II, had internalized a different set of attitudes from those of the older generations. Life experiences of economic prosperity, political stability, and militar security had replaced the Great Depression, instability, and war. The worry was that this generation was less supportive of NATO and a strong national security policy because of these generational differences. Inglehart (1977) refers to these new values as "postmaterialist." Some empirical evidence substantiated these concerns.

Today, indications of such a generational divide on security issues are not present. Tables 9, 10, and 11 display responses to three questions crosstabulated by age. These are the same three issues examined earlier: support for NATO, confidence in the U.S., and support for U.S. military presence in Europe, respectively.

Age has a moderate effect on the issue of support for NATO in Great Britain and France, as Table 9 shows. However, in both of those countries even in the youngest age group support for NATO exceeds 50%. In Britain, where the relationship is strongest, the difference in support between the youngest and oldest age groups is less than 20 percentage points.

Table 9

Support For NATO, by Age, 1991

		Under 31	31-55 years old	Over 55
Great Britain	Yes	59	77	78
	No/DK	41	23	22
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	296	452	308
West Germany	Yes	66	71	68
	No/DK	34	29	32
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	325	417	330
France	Yes	53	57	61
	No/DK	47	43	39
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	330	426	244

QUESTION: "Some people say that NATO is still essential to our country's security. Others say NATO is no longer essential to our country's security. Which view is closer to your own?"

NOTE: Gamma correlation coefficient for Britain = .28, West Germany = .03, and France = .10; $p < .01$ for each.

SOURCE: *Euro-Barometer 35*.

Table 10

Confidence in the United States, by Age, 1991

		Under 31	31-55 years old	Over 55
Great Britain	Great/Fair	80	76	77
	Little/None/DK	20	24	23
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	296	451	308
West Germany	Great/Fair	74	80	73
	Little/None/DK	26	20	27
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	326	417	330
France	Great/Fair	66	65	71
	Little/None/DK	34	35	29
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	330	426	244

QUESTION: "How much confidence do you have in the United States to deal responsibly with world problems? Do you have a great deal of confidence, a fair amount of confidence, very little confidence, or no confidence at all?"

NOTE: Gamma correlation coefficient for Britain = -.05, West Germany = -.02, and France = .06; $p < .01$ for each.

SOURCE: *Euro-Barometer 35*.

Table 11

Support For U.S. Military Presence, by Age, 1991

		Under 31	31-55 years old	Over 55
Great Britain	Agree	59	64	73
	Disagree	41	36	27
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	283	443	295
West Germany	Agree	58	62	64
	Disagree	42	38	36
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	306	405	303
France	Agree	40	46	56
	Disagree	60	54	44
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	299	387	229

QUESTION: "Please tell me whether you agree strongly, agree slightly, disagree slightly, or disagree strongly with this statement: the United States military presence in Europe is necessary for the security of (your country).

NOTE: Gamma correlation coefficient for Britain = .20, West Germany = .08, and France = .20; $p < .01$ for each. Categories collapsed: strongly and slightly agree = agree; and strongly and slightly disagree = disagree.

SOURCE: *Euro-Barometer 35*.

On the question of confidence in the United States, age is not related to opinion at all. Table 10 shows high and equivalent levels of confidence for all age groups in all three countries.

The effects of age are weak on the third question, about support for the U.S. militar presence in Europe (see Table 11). On this question, France displays the strongest relationship, but again the difference between support among the youngest and oldest groups is less than 20 percentage points.

Thus, any major concerns about generational effects and security issues may be laid aside for now. These findings show some relationship between age and opinion on security issues, but not to an extent which could portend large shifts in future sentiment as the younger cohorts mature and enter the political process.

Partisan Influences

Potentially, partisan loyalties could influence significantly the politics of security affairs. I West European political parties polarize over these issues, the policy implications would be great. Given the ideological nature of European parties, such an occurrence is possible, and during the 1980s, substantial differences existed among the various political parties.

American political parties stand in sharp contrast to those in Europe. Moderate Republicans and conservative Democrats routinely blur any ideological meaning to American party labels, and the nominating procedures in the U.S. are such that candidates and office holders need not ever answer to the party organizations. Although it is common to say that the United States has two centrist parties, in reality it has two parties both to the right of center.

There has never been any socialist tradition (much less communist) in America. Additionally, the tradition of bipartisan foreign policy making in the United States has promoted the notion that "politics stops at the water's edge."

Political parties in West Europe cover the entire ideological landscape. The British Labour Party, the Social Democrats in Germany (SPD), and the Socialist Party in France (PS) are a parties of the left within the classic Socialist tradition. Additionally, France still has its Communist Party (PCF), which polls about 10% of the vote. The German Green Party in some ways defies ideological identity, but its issue positions place it well to the left, although without the socialist doctrine. The British Liberal Party and the German Free Democrats (FDP) hold down the political center in those countries. The British Conservative Party and the German coalition partners of the Christian Democrats (CDU) and Christian Social Union (CSU) are right leaning parties in those countries. In France, the Union for French Democracy (UDF) and the Rally for the Republic (RPR) form the right of center coalition. France also has a party on the far right, the National Front (FN), which polls between 5% and 14% of the vote with it anti-immigration and anti-communism message.

In the early 1980s, concerned observers questioned the commitment to NATO by the political left. In some ways it appeared the parties of the left had rejected Atlanticis altogether (Haseler 1983; Rossi 1985). Public opinion data showed polarization occurring, with the parties on the right much more supportive of NATO and a strong national security than the parties of the left (Flynn and Rattinger 1985; Ziegler 1987b).

As the data in Tables 12, 13, and 14 depict, large partisan differences remain. The French Communist Party and the German Greens display the lowest support for NATO, the United

States, and U.S. troops. However, the three principal parties on the left, the socialist parties, a support these issues in percentages greater than 50%, except for the French Socialist Party on the question of U.S. military presence. If support among the parties on the left was well below 50% while support on the right was far above 50% (for example, 35% support on the left and 75% support on the right), then one could conclude that attitudes were polarizing over these issues, but the levels of support observed here do not suggest that to be the case.

In Britain, an average of 24 percentage points separates the Labour Party from the Conservatives. The Conservatives are clearly more pro-NATO. Within Labour, pacifism has traditionally been a strongly-held view. As recently as 1987, the Labour Party leader, Neil Kinnock, advocated a defense policy based on passive resistance. However, as Table 12 shows, on all three policy questions, a majority of the Labour respondents support NATO and the United States, so the differences between the parties today are in degree not position.

In Germany, an average of only 15 percentage points separates the SPD from the CDU/CSU on the three questions. Since renouncing its most extreme socialist positions in 1959, the SPD has firmly supported military preparations and German membership in NATO. It was a socialist chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, who proposed the dual-track decision in 1979, which advocated deploying the Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe. As Table 13 shows, the SPD does support NATO and the U.S. with healthy majorities. The Greens are much less supportive of NATO and the U.S. than the other parties; however, the Greens constitute only about 8% of the respondents and their main concerns are with other issues.

The French Communist Party displays the lowest support for these issues than any party from any country. But, the PCF garners only 9% of the respondents. Historically, French

policy makers on the left and right have advocated international independence for France and a suspicion of NATO and the United States. De Gaulle consistently spoke out against any possible infringement of French sovereignty, and the French Socialist Party under Mitterand never opposed the French independent nuclear force, the *force de frappe*. As Table 14 shows. between the two main parties in France, the difference is 16 percentage points, about the same as the main parties in Germany.

The partisan influences are greatest in Great Britain. This finding is supported by the percentage variation between the main parties in each country as just discussed, and by the strength of the gamma correlation coefficient computed for these relationships (average gamma for Britain = .47; Germany = .39; and France = .42).

Two factors may explain the strength of partisan effects in Britain. First, the British party system has no party to the left of Labour, like the Greens in Germany or the PCF in France. So, all the anti-NATO and Anti-American sentiment resides in the one major opposition party in Britain. The second possible factor is that both the German SPD and the French Socialists were in power during some of the years of increased tension in the Alliance in the 1970s and 1980s. There may be a moderating effect on the views of a leftist party who, while in power, must deal with allies and national security issues.

Thus, partisan differences currently appear significant but not dramatic. The major parties do approach these issues with different levels of support among their rank-and-file. Shoul these differences increase in the future, they could become important in regard to polic choices offered by the different parties. For the moment, however, the West European parties are not polarized over the issues of NATO and the United States.

Table 12

British Attitudes, by Party, 1991

		Labour	Liberals	Conservatives
1. *Is NATO still essential?*	Yes	61	85	85
	No/DK	39	15	15
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	152	62	245
2. *Confidence in the US?*	Great/Fair	70	73	89
	Little/None	30	27	11
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	152	62	245
3. *Are US troops necessary?*	Yes	52	70	81
	No	48	30	19
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	N	146	61	237

QUESTIONS: The foreign policy questions are the same as Tables 1, 3, and 4, respectively. The question on political party asked which party the respondent feels closest to.

NOTES: Gamma correlation coefficient for Question 1 = .46, Question 2 = .46, and Question 3 = .50; $p < .01$. The number of missing cases is sizable because those responding with a minor party or "Don't Know" are not included in the analysis. Missing cases for question 1 = 597; question 2 = 597; question 3 = 612.

SOURCE: *Euro-Barometer 35*.

Table 13

West German Attitudes, by Party, 1991

		Greens	SPD	FDP	CDU/CSU
1. *Is NATO still essential?*	Yes	40	65	77	80
	No/DK	60	35	23	20
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
	N	42	223	40	217
2. *Confidence in the US?*	Great/Fair	59	77	80	87
	Little/None	41	23	20	13
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
	N	42	223	40	217
3. *Are US troops necessary?*	Yes	33	55	56	76
	No	67	45	44	24
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
	N	42	216	39	211

QUESTIONS: The foreign policy questions are the same as Tables 1, 3, and 4, respectively. The question on political party asked which party the respondent feels closest to.

NOTES: Gamma correlation coefficient for Question 1 = .40, Question 2 = .35, and Question 3 = .43; $p < .01$. The number of missing cases is sizable because those responding with a minor party or "Don't Know" are not included in the analysis. Missing cases for question 1 = 551; question 2 = 551; question 3 = 565.

SOURCE: *Euro-Barometer 35*.

Table 14

French Attitudes, by Party, 1991

		PCF	PS	UDF/RPR	NF
1. *Is NATO still essential?*	Yes	31	61	73	72
	No/DK	69	39	27	28
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
	N	35	194	128	18
2. *Confidence in the US?*	Great/Fair	31	70	88	72
	Little/None	67	30	12	28
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
	N	35	194	128	18
3. *Are US troops necessary?*	Yes	26	41	59	71
	No	74	59	41	29
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
	N	31	184	125	17

QUESTIONS: The foreign policy questions are the same as Tables 1, 3, and 4, respectively. The question on political party asked which party the respondent feels closest to.

NOTES: Gamma correlation coefficient for Question 1 = .36, Question 2 = .51, and Question 3 = .40; $p < .01$. The number of missing cases is sizable because those responding with a minor party or "Don't Know" are not included in the analysis. Missing cases for question 1 = 625; question 2 = 625; question 3 = 643.

SOURCE: *Euro-Barometer 35*.

East European Opinion

Public opinion data are limited for East European countries on these issues. This section makes some preliminary observations about the three countries slated for NATO membership: the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland.

On the first issue of attitudes toward NATO, these East European countries are supportive. On the specific question of NATO membership, majorities in these three countries favor joining, as Table 15 indicates. Respondents in Poland display the highest support for NATO membership; however, the level of support decreased in all three countries in 1996, with the Czech Republic having only the barest of majorities, supporting NATO membership.

Other data reinforce this observation about low support in the Czech Republic. "In 1996, Professors Jindrich Dvorak and Otakar Mike, on the staff of the Military Academy at Brno, found through domestic polls that, at most, only 25 to 40 percent of the Czech people actually favored joining NATO" (Atkeson 1997, 20).

An interesting aspect of East European support for NATO is that in some countries larger majorities believe they will be admitted into NATO than even support membership. In the Czech Republic it is 65%, and in Hungary 63%, who believe they are likely to be admitted into NATO within the next five years. Compared with Table 15, these majorities are significantly greater than the level of support for membership. In Poland, 67% expect to be admitted into NATO (USIA 1996, 10). Citizens in these three countries may have come to believe tha NATO membership is inevitable. However, although many expect to join NATO in the near future, these publics balk at the potential obligations of NATO membership, as the next four tables indicate.

Table 15

East European Support for NATO Membership
Percentages

	Czech Rep		Hungar		Poland	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
Strongly Favor	25	17	25	19	45	28
Somewhat Favor	34	34	33	38	36	44
Somewhat Oppose	18	21	15	15	6	9
Strongly Oppose	9	12	12	12	2	3
Don't Know	14	16	15	16	11	16
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	1212	1169	1000	1000	992	1088

QUESTION: "If [survey country] had the opportunity to become a full member of NATO, would you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose our country doing so?"

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 10.

On the question of sending troops to defend other NATO countries, the level of support i low. Only in Poland does a majority support this (see Table 16). And in all three cases, the level of support for sending troops is lower than support for joining NATO. An interesting comparison is the response to a question of how likely they believe it is that NATO would come to their country's defense if attacked. Large majorities in these three countries believe that NATO would come to their aid if they were an alliance member and were under attack: Czech Republic 68%, Hungary 57%, and Poland 63% (USIA 1996, 26). This could sugges many East Europeans are unaware of the requirements of NATO membership, or they expec to be exempt for some reason.

Table 16

East European Support for Sending Troops
Percentages

	Czech Rep		Hungar		Poland	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
Support	42	45	26	32	55	68
Oppose	50	48	69	60	35	24
Don't Know	8	7	5	8	10	8
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	1212	1169	1000	1000	992	1088

QUESTION: "As you may know, if we join NATO there are certain things we MAY be asked to do. Please tell me if you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose: Sending our troops to defend another NATO country.

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 25.

East Europeans remain largely reluctant to assume other responsibilities that may come with NATO membership. Tables 17, 18, and 19 display data on three such questions. Poland is the only one in which a majority of the public voice support on the questions of military overflights, stationing NATO troops, and NATO exercises. In most cases, however, support for this obligations increased in 1996. In Hungary, on the question of support for NATO troops being stationed in your country, the level increased from 34% to 44% (see Table 18). This change may be due to the presence of NATO troops in southern Hungary which serves as a staging base for NATO activities in Bosnia. And most recently, "Six in ten Hungarians now support the NATO presence" (USIA 1996, 26).

Table 17

East European Support for Overflight by NATO Aircraft
Percentages

	Czech Rep		Hungar		Poland	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
Support	26	30	35	36	41	53
Oppose	67	63	58	57	47	37
Don't Know	7	7	7	7	12	10
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	1212	1169	1000	1000	992	1088

QUESTION: "As you may know, if we join NATO there are certain things we MAY be asked to do. Please tell me if you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose: Regular, routine overflights by NATO aircraft over our country.

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 26.

Table 18

East European Support for NATO Troops in Own Country
Percentages

	Czech Rep		Hungar		Poland	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
Support	30	31	34	44	56	52
Oppose	63	63	59	49	34	38
Don't Know	7	6	7	7	10	10
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	1212	1169	1000	1000	992	1088

QUESTION: "As you may know, if we join NATO there are certain things we MAY be asked to do. Please tell me if you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose: Stationing NATO troops in our country.

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 26.

Table 19

East European Support for NATO Exercises
Percentages

	Czech Rep		Hungar		Poland	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
Support	33	34	28	26	45	67
Oppose	60	61	67	67	45	25
Don't Know	7	5	5	7	10	8
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	1212	1169	1000	1000	992	1088

QUESTION: "As you may know, if we join NATO there are certain things we MAY be asked to do. Please tell me if you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose: Regular, routine exercises by NATO in our country.

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 27.

Until recently, East Europeans had no experience with NATO exercises in their countries. Possibly, support for joint maneuvers will increase with more frequent exercises under the Partnership for Peace. Table 19 shows low support for NATO exercises, except in Poland where 67% in 1966 support such exercises in Poland.

Large majorities in all three countries oppose increasing military spending at the expense o social spending. As Table 20 shows, vast majorities are against this possible requirement linked to NATO membership. The cost of making their armed forces compatible with NATO forces is expected to be considerable. But when faced with the likely trade-off between military and

social spending, the East European publics reject increasing military spending. Given the economic hardships faced by many in these countries during their transition from command economies to market economies, this finding may not be too surprising. However, it could indicate political difficulties ahead once these countries begin to assume the responsibilities o NATO membership.

Table 20

East European Support for Military Versus Social Spending
Percentages

	Czech Rep		Hungar		Poland	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
Support	8	11	8	9	23	16
Oppose	86	84	86	87	67	74
Don't Know	6	5	6	4	10	10
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	1212	1169	1000	1000	992	1088

QUESTION: "As you may know, if we join NATO there are certain things we MAY be asked to do. Please tell me if you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose: Increasing the percentage of our national budget spent on the military rather than, for example, education and health care.

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 27.

Thus, while East Europeans support NATO membership, this support can be characterized as shallow. In the period from 1995 to 1996, this level of support for membership has actually decreased somewhat. Though many in East Europe want and expect to join the Alliance, for the most part they are not willing to shoulder perhaps the most basic requirements of membership -- sending troops to defend another NATO country, allowing overflights by NATO aircraft, having NATO troops stationed in their country, or having NATO exercises conducted on their soil. On the question of military spending, there is widespread opposition to increasing military budgets at the expense of social spending. Poland consistently displays the greatest support on all these issues. For whatever reasons -- political awareness, concerns over security, backing by the leadership, or its close proximity to Russia -- Poland appears to be the most enthusiastic prospective new member of the Alliance.

In regard to the United States, East European opinion has remained strongly favorable over the past several years. In 1996, favorable opinion in Poland was at a remarkable 91%, and the Czechs and Hungarians were very high also at 78% and 77%, respectively (Table 21). U.S. participation in the Balkans and its role in the Dayton accords may explain this positive sentiment. As with the items about NATO, Polish opinion toward the U.S. tends to be the most favorable.

The level of favorable opinion toward the United States in Eastern Europe is as great or i some cases greater than that in Western Europe. On the same survey question as in Table 21, British favorable opinion was 80%, French 70%, and German 81% (USIA 1996, 36). So, little difference exists between East and West Europeans on their views of the U.S.

Table 21

East European Opinion of the United States
Percent Responding Very Favorable and Somewhat Favorable

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Czech Rep	87	88	85	82	79	78
Hungary	83	77	84	79	72	77
Poland	89	83	81	84	78	91

QUESTION: "Do you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of the United States?"

NOTES: N=1000 in each sample (approximately) for each year.

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 38.

Table 22

Perceptions of U.S. Concern for East European Security
Percentages

	Czech Rep		Hungar		Poland	
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
U.S. Cares	42	54	27	41	28	37
U.S. Doesn't Care	46	35	66	50	60	47
Don't Know	12	11	7	9	12	16
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	1212	1169	1000	1000	992	1088

QUESTION: "How much do you think the U.S. cares about the security of central and eastern Europe -- a great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or not at all?"

SOURCE: USIA 1996, 37.

Opinion toward the United States is not as favorable when the question deals specifically with security, as Table 22 indicates. On the question in 1996 about whether the U.S. cares about the security of East Europe, only 37% of Polish respondents believed the U.S. cares a great deal and a fair amount. The Czechs and Hungarians had greater confidence in the United States with 54% and 41%, respectively. These levels are far below the more general opinion o the U.S. displayed in Table 21, and could be more significant in regard to Alliance issues in the future. However, the perceptions of East European toward U.S. security concerns have improved recently as Table 22 shows, and with greater presence in the future, these levels could be expected to continue to increase.

VI. CONCLUSION

The West European public defines its post-Cold War security interests within the structure of the Atlantic Alliance. The findings indicate a strengthening of support for NATO since the end of the Cold War. This has occurred despite the faltering of other European institutions: momentum toward European unity has slowed, Maastricht has become a divisive symbol, the European economy may be in a prolonged structural recession, and "a nasty, racist form o populism has spread through much of the continent" (Harries 1993, 282). The memory o NATO's successes in the Cold War and its promise of providing stability to Eastern Europe and the Balkans may have given NATO a level of favorable public support in West Europe that is deep and long-lasting. Policy makers will find this support valuable if Europe faces conflic and instability on its borders in the future.

In regard to the United States, European opinion is more variable. It shifts back and forth depending on the latest security concerns. A strong tendency has always existed in Europe to view the United States as unsophisticated and incompetent in foreign affairs; therefore, confidence in the United States dropped in the early 1980s during the "evil empire" rhetoric and again in 1995 with the uncertain policy on Bosnia. However, in 1996, after a unified NATO response in Bosnia, sizeable majorities in Britain, Germany, and France expressed confidence in the U.S. ability to deal responsibly with world problems. Currently, levels of confidence in the United States are substantial in West Europe. East European opinion of the United States in general has been consistently favorable during the 1990s; however, their perception of U.S. concern for East European security has been considerably lower. Confidence in the U.S. as the Alliance leader is crucial and must be fostered by policy makers, especially among the publics in the new East European nations.

Although the debate over NATO expansion continues among policy makers and scholars, the West European public appears comfortable with the idea. Support for admitting Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic is stronger than support for including other countries, such as Bulgaria and Romania. An interesting observation is that support for expansion weakens as one nears Eastern Europe, with the Germans displaying the lowest support and the British the highest. How deeply these views toward expansion are held is not clear. Possibly, support for the expansion of NATO could weaken if the policy debate becomes louder and more visible to the public. East Europeans in the countries of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic support NATO membership; yet, this support appears somewhat shallow, and it could decline as fiscal and other measures are undertaken as part of NATO membership.

The findings uncovered only weak relationships between age and foreign policy opinions i West Europe. The trend was for older generations to have greater support for NATO and the presence of U.S. troops; however, confidence in the ability of the U.S. to handle world affairs was not influenced by age. Thus, little evidence was found of an anti-Atlanticist or anti-American "Successor Generation."

Partisan effects, however, were stronger. Political parties on the left of the ideological spectrum in West Europe displayed significantly lower levels of support for NATO and the United States than parties on the right. Cross-nationally, these effects were statistically the strongest in Great Britain. But in regard to individual political parties, the lowest support was among the German Greens and the French Communists, both with little chance of gaining power. If favorable opinion toward NATO weakens because of a foreign policy setback or some other reason, partisan differences could become more pronounced and politically meaningful.

European nations face important challenges as they approach the end of this century. The implications raised in this study are many. As NATO continues its commitment in Bosnia, proceeds with its plans for eastward expansion, and confronts new security threats in Kosovo and elsewhere, policy makers should be able to draw upon a considerable reservoir of suppor among the West European public. Concerns remain, however, about the resolve of East European publics in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Although they desire and expect NATO membership, their willingness to take on fundamental Alliance responsibilities may be lacking. "Whether Europe unravels for a third time this century depends on if the Wes summons the political will and strategic vision to address the causes of potential instability and

conflict before it is too late" (Asmus, et al, 1993). An alliance that is internally cohesive, militarily capable, and supported by the public is crucial to Europe's future. The European public, one of the principal domestic sources of foreign policy, will contribute significantly to NATO's post-Cold War security policy.

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