HCSS SECURITY

NATO’s Futures through Russian and Chinese Beholders’ Eyes
HCSS helps governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to understand the fast-changing environment and seeks to anticipate the challenges of the future with practical policy solutions and advice.
NATO’s Futures through Russian and Chinese Beholders’ Eyes*

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1. Introduction

As NATO celebrates the 70th anniversary of its Founding Treaty this year, many fundamental aspects of its future are widely debated within the Alliance itself.1 Western views on NATO’s future have, throughout the seven decades of its existence, ranged from those who predicted NATO’s imminent demise to those who claimed that the many ties that bind the two sides of the Northern Atlantic are so deep and enduring that they are bound to last for decades to come. Throughout this period, the center of gravity in this debate has always tended to lean towards the latter view. More recently, however, the Western outlook on NATO’s future is increasingly being painted in decidedly more somber hues.

But what do other key players in the international system think about NATO’s future(s)? To answer this question, the Dutch ministries of Defense and of Foreign Affairs asked HCSS to take a closer and more systematic look at how Chinese and Russian experts have been analyzing NATO’s future in their languages over the past three years – basically since the beginning of the Trump presidency. Many of the key Chinese and Russian scholars working on these issues also publish in English. Given the nature of these countries’ regimes, however, it is often unclear to what extent they are signaling to the broader Western or international community as opposed to reflecting their own opinions or views. This may differ from publications in their own

language primarily targeted at domestic audiences, which also clearly include part of their countries’ elites whose knowledge of the English language might preclude them from being exposed to their projections and ideas.

This document is structured in four sections. After a succinct overview of the method used in Chapter 2, the Chapters 3 and 4 analyze the main findings for the Chinese and the Russian language domains respectively. The final Chapter 5 gives the conclusions as well as some broader reflections on the promise and peril of this type of foresight work for improving the government’s strategic anticipation capacity.
2. Method

The method used in this study is based on the HCSS MetaFore approach. This protocol is an attempt to be more exhaustive and systematic in the quest for and analysis of relevant foresight insights on any given topic. There is value in both more 'creative' (and impressionistic) and in more 'analytical' (and systematic) forms of foresight. The HCSS MetaFore approach gravitates towards the latter, as it tries to map the bandwidth of (both creative and analytical) views on different future topics based on a standard protocol. This Chapter will briefly describe the main steps in this protocol. A more detailed description can be found in Annex 1.

The first step was to iteratively construct queries in both languages that would be as similar as possible. Experimental queries were applied to several available multilingual search engines as well as bibliometric and full-text databases - Baidu, Dimensions, Google Scholar, Google Search, Lens and Web of Science - to discover search query terms that would allow us to identify documents with the highest possible signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) and number of relevant results. Our international team compiled a list of words and phrases relevant to NATO’s future, combined those in actual search queries, ran those on the search engines and databases, documented the signal-to-noise ratio outcomes for those queries, and refined them iteratively until the search results were found to be satisfactory (or any attempts of further improvement failed). In the end, our team converged on two broadly similar queries in both languages, with the resulting query – in the case of Google Search containing terms like “future of NATO” OR “NATO prospects” OR “foresight for NATO” OR “further existence of NATO” OR “NATO in 5 years” OR “what will happen to NATO” OR “development of NATO” OR “scenarios for NATO” OR “NATO’s fate” OR “Russia’s membership in NATO”.


For Russian, this yielded the following generic Boolean search query “будущее НАТО” OR “НАТО в будущем” OR “в будущем НАТО” OR “Перспективы НАТО” OR “прогноз для НАТО” OR “далнейшее существование НАТО” OR “НАТО через 5 лет” OR “что будет с НАТО” OR “развития НАТО” OR “сценарии для НАТО” OR “судьба НАТО” OR “членство России в НАТО”. For Chinese, it ended up being “北约的发展” OR “北约的命运” OR “北约的存在” OR “北约的前景” OR “北约的未来” OR “北约的途径” OR “北约的趋势” OR “北约的演变” OR “北约的危机” OR “未来北约” OR “北约的预测” OR “北约的预测”.
In the second step, we ran these queries on the search engines and databases mentioned within the time span of 1 January 2017 through 24 March 2019. Filtering out duplicates and less relevant documents yielded a much smaller number of sources than the team had anticipated (an important research finding in its own right). The final corpus that was fully analyzed contained 29 Chinese sources and 59 Russian ones. All sources were provided with metadata that specified their country of origin, the nature of the publication and – to the extent possible – the background of the author.

The third step consisted of extracting various aspects of plausible futures (which we call ‘futuribles’)

from these corpora of multilingual foresight studies. The initial MetaFore research design envisaged ‘coding’ all documents. Given the very small number of Chinese studies, however, the team decided to perform a more traditional purely qualitative analysis that would still be based on a number (in this case eight) of aspects that seemed to be the most interesting ones to emerge out of the documents.

Chapter 3 is structured around these eight topics.

For the Russian sources, however, our team performed a full-fledged coding effort. For this purpose, we used Dedoose, a program designed for the organization and qualitative analysis of documents through the application of codes. Drawing upon an earlier coding scheme for NATO’s futures that had been developed by HCSS for an analogous 2006 research effort, a team of three coders developed a 3-level coding scheme. The team ended up applying 542 codes (‘futuribles’) to 158 excerpts across

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8 This date was chosen to ensure our findings reflected the new, in various respects dramatically changed, geopolitics after the election of US President Trump.

9 A term borrowed from one of the fathers of the French ‘école de prospective’, Bertrand de Jouvenel, who in turn borrowed it from the Molinists, followers of XVIth-century Spanish Jesuit-theologian Louis de Molina, who used the Latin term ‘futuribilia’. De Jouvenel’s main work is Bertrand de Jouvenel, L’art de la conjure (Editions du Rocher, 1964); more recent discussions of the term can be found in Penti Malaska and Ilkka Virtanen, “Theory of Futuribles and Historibles,” Futura 1, no. 2009 (2009): 65–84; Penti Malaska and Ilkka Virtanen, “Theory of Futuribles,” Finnish Future Society. Futura, 2005, 2–3; Ziauddin Sardar, “The Namesake: Futures; Futures Studies; Futurology; Futuristic; Foresight—What’s in a Name?”, Futures 42, no. 3 (April 2010): 177–84; Eleonora Barbieri Masini, “The Past and the Possible Futures of Futures Studies: Some Thoughts on Ziauddin Sardar’s ‘the Namesake,’” Futures 42, no. 3 (April 2010): 185–89. The word is a neologism based on the French words futur and possible. For all of these authors, futuribles refers to the ‘fan of possible futures’, which we prefer to label futurespace (also in line with). In our own vocabulary, futuribles refers to the different elements that, when combined, make up the (knowable) future-space of different possible futures.

10 And partially due to HCSS’ limited China language expertise.

11 These topics were expressed in the form of the following questions and statements: "Will NATO continue to exist?" "The US government’s attitude towards NATO is a source of instability", "The EU is moving toward development of a more independent unified European defense", “Internal strife is a major problem in NATO (including budget)”, "The source emphasizes rising external challenges", "The source mentions a role for China", “The source mentions non-traditional threats (cyber, hybrid warfare)”, "The source mentions NATO expansion/ globalisation".

12 In effect setting up a small experiment to compare the findings of a purely qualitative analysis by a single China expert and a more mixed-methods analysis conducted by a team of coders with expertise in the field of Russian international behavior.


all documents. Those codes were double-checked by the entire team, leading to several re-codings as well as eliminations because of the lack of inter-coder agreement or assumed irrelevance.

In the fourth step, the coded excerpts were imported into a more powerful visualization tool (Tableau\textsuperscript{15}) which the analysts used to identify and document interesting findings. The final table with all futuribles is accessible through this link, and a public, interactive version of the Tableau visualization here. The Russian analysis is based on these visualized data.

The fifth and final step consisted of writing up these findings in this report.

\textsuperscript{15} http://www.tableau.com/
3. Findings from the Chinese language domain

3.1 NATO’s future is not on China’s (public) radar screen

The small number of documents we were able to identify, retrieve and analyze – despite a quite extensive search effort with search queries that were less stringent than we would normally apply (or than we applied to the Russian corpus) – suggests that this topic barely figures on China’s public agenda. As in the Russian case, our actual knowledge of what is being debated or decided at the highest echelons of power is widely acknowledged to be very limited, a caveat that applies to all our findings. But our analysis, which includes all publicly accessible official sources, still suggests that a big discrepancy between the real ‘internal’ salience of this topic and the publicly displayed one is quite implausible.

3.2 Does NATO have a future?

Much of the discourse on the future of NATO is prompted by US President Trump’s anti-NATO campaign language and his subsequent controversial actions as president, most notably, his undiplomatic insistence on raising member states financial contributions and his threats to leave NATO.

However, many sources also point out that NATO has been struggling with its raison d’être ever since the end of the Cold War. A People’s Liberation Army Daily commentary argues there is nothing novel about Trump’s thesis of NATO being outdated.

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16 Our Chinese corpus also includes blog entries, etc.
18 Or at least those that are in the Google Search cache - which we found to be significantly more expansive than the Chinese search giant Baidu.
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“Post-Cold War, under an unrelenting chorus questioning the need for the US-led NATO to continue to exist, NATO has been constantly changing, seeking the best development path and promoting strategic transformation”  

Cui Hongjian, Head of the Europe Unit at the Chinese Institute of International Studies, argues NATO has devolved into a bureaucratic and incompetent organization that plays up threats to safeguard its continued existence. Cui argues:

“One of the greatest challenges NATO has been facing since the end of the Cold War, is its lack of direction. Member states cannot agree what its greatest threat is, making NATO a product of compromises. NATO’s membership is growing and growing, but it has difficulties effectively addressing threats”.

Cui argues that what he calls the Ukrainian Crisis shows that NATO lacks effective methods to address crises. Likewise, a different article argues that NATO’s track record in the Iraq War, the Russo-Georgian War and the Ukrainian Crisis is mediocre at best, leading many European members to doubt NATO’s capabilities. A popular blog explaining global political issues in layman’s terms, also doubts NATO efficacy, pointing out NATO has not demonstrated any success in fighting terrorism.

However, most sources do not seem to doubt the continued existence of NATO. The view that the US will retract from NATO is not thought likely. An article originally published in the National Defense News offers five reasons why the US will stay in NATO:

- The US needs NATO to hold on to its global hegemony.
- NATO allows the US to operate globally, making use of allies' geographically widespread territories.
- Through NATO, the US can control Europe (“holding Europe hostage”) and NATO helps the US to keep in Russia in check, especially through NATO’s presence on Russia’s borders.
- The US arms industry greatly benefits from its association with NATO.

21 崔洪建 [Cui Hongjian].
Wang Dong, Associate Professor at Peking University and Vice Director of the Institute for China-US People-to-People Exchange, argues NATO is actually becoming more and more important to the US, quoting tensions with Russia, concerns of international terrorism, cyber-attacks and other non-traditional threats.25

### 3.3 US attitude towards NATO

Judging the present US administration’s stance toward NATO, most sources seem to conclude that Trump's threats to abandon NATO are more talk than action. In fact, multiple sources point out the US has stepped up its commitment to European defense (e.g. through the European Deterrence Initiative prompted by Russia’s annexation of Crimea). For the first time since 2013, the US has increased the number of its troops stationed in Europe, signifying a return to “great power competition”.26

> “The US currently has two strategic requirements for NATO. Firstly, getting NATO back to the ‘great power competition’ track, strengthening the containment of Russia. Secondly, pushing NATO’s European member states to take more defense responsibility [within NATO], while containing their inclination to jointly develop their own independent defense capabilities.”27

Professor Wang describes Trump’s insistence on increased buy-in from member states as “very Trump.” Wang also notes the importance of a tough stance on “freeloading allies” considering the 2018 mid-term elections. The same source continues to state that, so far, Trump’s verbal pressure has not yielded much results yet as European countries increase spending at their own pace, and it is by no means a given that US hopes will be met by 2024.28

Wu Minwen, of the National University of Defense School of Information and Communication, expects the goal of a contribution of 2% of GDP will eventually be achieved, although the year in which member states will do so may differ.29

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27 李朋芳 [Li Pengfang], ”北约指挥结构扩容的背后-新华网 [Behind the Expansion of NATO Command Structure].”

28 人民日报海外版 [People’s Daily Overseas Edition], “北约峰会能躲开G7式尴尬吗？ [Can the NATO Summit Escape the G7 Style?].”

29 中青在线, “特朗普‘催逼’北约成员国增加防务支出 [Trump ‘Forces’ NATO Member States to Increase Defense Spending].”
Renmin University Professor of International Relations, Wang Yiwei argues that:

“Following World War Two, pacifism has become deeply rooted in Europeans’ hearts. Lots of European countries are not willing to invest too much in the military, the most prominent example being Germany. This will be unlikely to change in the short term. On the other hand, Europe’s military industrial complex is far from complete, as European countries are used to seeing the US-led NATO as their safety umbrella”.

In addition, multiple sources point to European economies stagnating, further complicating US efforts to have its allies increase defense spending.

### 3.4 Internal disagreements

Disagreements and division among NATO member states, e.g. on financial arrangements or strategic priorities, are a recurring element in the discourse on the future of NATO. This has probably intensified since the Trump presidency. One source suggests that presidents before Trump were still able to “focus on the overall situation”, essentially acting as a benign hegemon to its European allies, but Trump’s style of talking business and not friendship has exacerbated and brought to the forefront conflicts that, in the past, were kept controlled or suppressed.

Beyond the issue of members’ contributions, other key points of divergence between the US and NATO’s European member states are the Syrian Civil War, climate change, the Iran nuclear issue, and trade tariffs. These differences may damage relations in the security field, the basis of US-Europe relations.

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30 人民日报海外版 [People's Daily Overseas Edition], “北约峰会能躲开G7式尴尬吗？ [Can the NATO Summit Escape the G7 Style?]”
31 时事君, “在特朗普的眼里，北约存在的意义还剩下多少？ [In the eyes of Trump, what is the meaning of NATO's existence?]”, Chinese question-and-answer website, 知乎专栏, July 12, 2018, [https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/39568967](https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/39568967); 崔洪建 [Cui Hongjian], “崔洪建：布鲁塞尔峰会：北约强刷存在感_中国国际问题研究院 [Cui Hongjian: Brussels Summit: NATO's Strong Sense of Presence].”
32 董磊, “驻德美军要撤？特朗普或拿北约前途当筹码迫使欧洲让步 [Should the US Military Stationed in Germany Withdraw? Trump or NATO's Future as a Chip to Force Europe to Give in],” [http://www.cankaoxiaoxi.com](http://www.cankaoxiaoxi.com), July 2018,
According to Wang Dong, these differences have not had any negative effects on the fundamental security framework so far, but Wang refers to Russian magazine “Expert” which reported that political unity, which has been the basis of NATO’s efficacy over the past 70 years, is under threat.

Furthermore, the issue of membership expansion divides NATO’s members. For instance, an article in the National Defense News argues countries like France and Germany do not agree with the US idea of globalizing NATO and NATO becoming the “global police”. In general, many sources referred to NATO’s expansion, particularly to recently acceded Montenegro and possible future member Georgia. However, there are fault lines among European member states as well. France and Germany want more say in the defense of their own region. Fearing nearby Russia, small and medium-sized countries in Eastern Europe like the Baltics, Poland and Romania, on the other hand, are much more willing to rely on the US-led NATO. Especially Northern European members advocate tough measures against Russia, while France and Germany maintain close ties with Russia as they depend on its energy exports. Another source sees differences in prevailing threats for Eastern European countries (Russia), Western Europe (terrorism), and Southern Europe (migration from North Africa).

3.5 European independent defense capabilities

Various sources point to a shift in European countries towards a more self-reliant defense policy. European countries have grown accustomed to the comfort of NATO’s safety umbrella, but in view of a changing global outlook, they are now seeing the need to start taking their own responsibility again.
Presently, Europe is incapable of mustering its own military force independent of NATO and it will take a long time before that changes. However, steps in this direction can be seen as European countries choosing not to put all their eggs in one basket (i.e. NATO).

Du Wenlong, military affairs expert, interprets France's President Macron's call for the establishment of a European army as a signal to the US that France and other countries are able and willing to take this stance if the US puts Europe in danger.40

Professor Wu Dahui, of the Tsinghua University International Relations Department, argues that NATO members' interests are aligned in that they agree that NATO's purpose is to counter traditional security threats and that that threat is currently mainly coming from Russia. Currently, Europe on its own would not be able to resist Russia. This is the consensus in NATO.41

"However, this does not mean Europe cannot push forward its own military capabilities [...] European countries are already taking consistent joint action in facing non-traditional threats. Perhaps on the road to future independent defense development, they need to first try and move forward in facing non-traditional threats. [...] What is not going to help Europe is wanting security, but not wanting to invest money in it".42

An article in the National Defense News notes “the acceleration of a unified EU defense” as a major factor influencing the future of NATO. It argues that US-Europe divergences are growing, as well as the awareness of military independence in Europe. Through the establishment of a joint military force, the EU hopes to get better at serving its own security needs. Such capacity-building efforts outside of the NATO framework will trigger resource competition, create antagonisms and challenge NATO’s position as Europe’s main defense organization.43

3.6 Rising external challenges

Many sources explicitly mention external challenges to NATO. The National Defense News lists the following: the ongoing stand-off with Russia, ever-intensifying...
terrorism, chaotic circumstances in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as growing challenges in the field of cyber security.\footnote{44}

After years of cuts in NATO’s command structure since the end of the Cold War, an initiative to revitalize NATO and help it counter diverse threats is taking place only now. Part of this initiative is the establishment of a new “cyber action center” to address the threat of cyber security and hybrid warfare. The integration of new technologies such as A.I., machine-learning and 3D printing into the field of defense is driving modernization at NATO.\footnote{45}

With regard to the Russian threat in particular, the same source notes that, in order to maintain its strategic advantage, NATO needs to counter increased Russian operations in Mediterranean and Atlantic.\footnote{46}

### 3.7 A role for China?

In the sources examined there is very little mention of a role for China in the future of NATO. One article in the \textit{China Youth Daily} notes how China, together with Russia, has been marked a strategic competitor in the 2017 US National Security Strategy. It also notes the switch from anti-terrorism to “great power competition” in the 2018 US National Defense Strategy.\footnote{47}

In an article by Xia Guohan, researcher at the Charhar Institute, China’s (passive) role in NATO’s future is mentioned. Xia argues that, two years in the Trump presidency, its strategy in the security field is becoming clearer:

\begin{quote}
“Trump appears to actually follow Kissinger’s advice, aiming to substantially ease US-Russian relations to reverse the strategic ‘US-China-Russia’ triangle of the Cold War, forming a strategic situation in which the US and Russia together counter China. However, this has not proven easy to achieve. First, the opposition forces in the United States have blocked the possibility of Trump easing US-Russia relations in Trump’s current term. Second, the paradox between the United States, Europe, and Russia is that the basis of NATO’s existence is to fend off the Russian threat. If the security relationship between the United States and Russia is relaxed, the foundation of NATO’s existence will be shaken, how will Europe then position itself? Third, Trump cannot afford Putin’s asking price, that is: Russian sovereignty over Crimea and conceding to Russia that the Assad regime be left in place in Syria.”
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\footnote{44} China National Defense News. \footnote{45} 李朋芳 [Li Pengfang]. “北约指挥结构扩容的背后-新华网 [Behind the Expansion of NATO Command Structure].” \footnote{46} 李朋芳 [Li Pengfang]. \footnote{47} 中青在线, “特朗普‘催逼’北约成员国增加防务支出 [Trump ‘Forces’ NATO Member States to Increase Defense Spending].”}
\end{flushright}
Therefore, a reverse “US-China-Russia” triangle strategy will profoundly affect the “US-Europe-Russia” triangle relationship.  

It may also be notable that multiple sources report on the Japanese participation in a naval exercise or other relations between Japan and NATO, arguably reflecting a preoccupation with the military-related activities of neighboring Japan.

### 3.8 Main Chinese takeaways

- NATO is currently in a difficult stage characterized by internal disagreement and strained transatlantic ties, but very few expect NATO to disintegrate.
- US President Trump is seen as a divisive and unconventional factor, but US strategic commitment to NATO is not in doubt.
- Russia is most often quoted as NATO’s main threat; China is hardly brought into the equation.
- Europe is expected to gradually develop more defense capabilities independent of NATO, but it will stay highly dependent on NATO for the foreseeable future.
- Considerable emphasis on rising external challenges, including “non-traditional” threats such as cyber-attacks.

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50 热血中国~Warm-Blooded China~，“北约开会日本凑热闹, 实为谋求军事正常化 [NATO Meets in Japan to Join in the Fun, in Fact, Seeking Military Normalization],” 热血中国~Warm-Blooded China~, July 31, 2019, [https://www.rexuecn.com/a/2018080126756.html](https://www.rexuecn.com/a/2018080126756.html)
4. Findings from the Russian language domain

4.1 What are authors most interested in?

The excerpts in this corpus that pertain to Russians’ views of the future of NATO deal overwhelmingly with NATO’s relations to third actors (see section 4.2). The second most often mentioned topic is the transatlantic link, followed by a cluster of topics dealing with the Alliance’s geographical reach and capabilities as well as with US leadership and credibility. We therefore observe that, contrary to Russia’s declaratory insistence on NATO’s primarily military nature and its allegedly offensive capabilities, these Russian authors pay significantly more attention to NATO’s ‘political’ side when discussing NATO’s future than to capabilities, operational effectiveness or military activities/operations. In a similar vein, it is interesting to note that the topic of the legality of NATO’s actions is barely addressed in Russian foresight views about NATO, despite Russia’s repeated criticism of the alleged international illegality of some of NATO’s actions, first and foremost in the 1999 bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia without a UN mandate.

![Figure 1: General topics across the Russian language corpus](image-url)
4.2 NATO’s future position towards other actors

NATO’s future position towards other actors is by far the most intensely discussed topic in the entire Russian corpus. Almost half of all coded excerpts fall in this category. Not surprisingly, NATO’s future position towards Russia itself is of most interest to these authors; it appears in almost half of all coded excerpts. Most of these excerpts foresee NATO’s attitudes towards Russia to be aggressive: two thirds of excerpts anticipate conflict, including armed conflict. One in five excerpts highlight that NATO’s strategy towards Russia will continue to be based on deterrence. Only a select few expect cooperation and competition (4 and 3 respectively, out of 45).

In this category of codes (NATO’s position towards other actors), there are only two subtopics that do not directly relate to Russia. They both pertain to future NATO membership: accession and exit. It may be worth noting that future Russian accession to NATO is not discussed at all in any of these documents, which differs from the 90s and in the beginning of the 2000s (and even before)\(^5\). Various authors are preoccupied by the possible accession to NATO of countries from Russia’s neighborhood or self-defined sphere of influence: Ukraine, Finland, Sweden, Moldova and Georgia. Of these countries, most attention is devoted to Ukraine, whereby most excerpts remain skeptical about that country’s prospects to join the Alliance. For example, the young Russian political expert Ivan Mezyukho (who lives in Crimea and held Ukrainian citizenship before the occupation of the peninsula) stated:

> “The majority of Ukraine’s citizens clearly understand that Ukraine is not welcome either in NATO or the EU. Let alone that Kyiv could hope to enter these organizations in the next 5 years.”\(^5\)

There is only one excerpt that refers to a country withdrawing from the alliance in the future, where the author states that Turkey is unlikely to leave NATO.

When it comes to NATO’s standpoint towards other organizations, we find two main topics: NATO’s cooperation with the EU and the possible substitution of NATO by a European ‘army’. The latter scenario is viewed as a very low probability in most excerpts. For example, Andriy Holtsov from the Kyiv Institute of International Relations suggests that even if a European army were to be created, it would supplement NATO,

\(^5\) The history of Russia’s flirtation - for various (at times genuine and constructive, at other times more disingenuous and duplicious) reasons - with NATO membership remains to be written, but Russian membership of the emerging Western Alliance was discussed much longer after the end of World War II than many currently remember; Stalin himself suggested joining NATO as late as 1952; Khrushchev ‘knocked on NATO’s door’ for two years; Gorbachev proposed Soviet membership in NATO 3 times in 1990; Yeltsin repeatedly discussed this with US president Clinton, and also Putin mentioned on a number of occasions that he had proposed this option early in his tenure. See Stephan De Spiegeleire, “Never Say Never. Some Implications of Russian NATO Membership” (CCSS Report for NATO Consultation, Command and Control Agency (NC3A)’s Long-Term Requirement’s Study, December 2005).

not substitute it. At the same time, Russia’s official position, expressed by Vladimir Putin in his interview to RT France, is quite positive:

“By and large, this is a positive process in terms of strengthening the multipolarity of the world. Europe is a powerful economic entity and it is natural that they want to be independent in areas of defense and security.”

Figure 2: Overview of how NATO’s standpoints towards other actors are perceived

Figure 3: Most mentioned countries

Almost all subtopics in this category are dominated by authors who are military or policy experts. Striking exceptions are the issues of Ukraine’s accession to NATO and the substitution of NATO by a European army, which both draw more attention from the media than from experts. Meanwhile, the topic of NATO’s substitution by any other institution is discussed mostly in academia with media following second, suggesting that NATO’s (also future) preeminent place in the European security architecture is more accepted in official and expert circles.

4.3 The transatlantic link and US leadership

The transatlantic link within the Alliance is the second most frequently highlighted future topic. It is present in 29 excerpts (almost one in five). Over 18 of these deal with the future trajectory of relations between the US and the European members of NATO. Most of them expect this link to either remain the same (6) or weaken (8). Among those that explicitly discuss the strength of the transatlantic link, 2 out of 3 say that it is weak. One of the Valdai experts, Andrey Sushentsov puts it as follows:

“The last group of scenarios is related to the fundamental decline of NATO’s institutional capabilities and a crisis in the organization due to a parallel decrease of American military and political presence in Europe and the further weakening of liberal forces in the West. This group of scenarios does not necessarily imply the formal dissolution of the Alliance – instead it suggests the probability that it will be

\[54\] By which we mean the strength of the link – both political and operational – between American and European allies.
We observe an interesting difference between different types of authors with respect to their views on the future transatlantic link. Military and policy experts mostly think that the link will remain stable or strengthen; whereas representatives of academia and the media are the ones that expect the transatlantic link to weaken in the future. This could be seen as an indication that there is still more hard-nosed analysis taking place in official and expert circles.

We see a fairly similar picture in the US leadership and credibility topic, defined as the extent to which the US will remain engaged in NATO and willing to assume a leadership role. This topic appears in 22 excerpts (15%), with 8 foreseeing that US leadership will remain stable, 8 that it will weaken and only 3 that it will strengthen. All authors that touch upon the comparison between the US and European leadership agree that US leadership and credibility are stronger than Europe’s. If we look at the authors backgrounds, we once again find that military and political experts mostly think that US leadership will strengthen or remain stable, whereas it is mostly media people who think that it will weaken.

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55 The report "The Future of NATO: origins of uncertainty and possible scenarios", prepared by 8 Valdai experts, elaborate on the scenarios of further transformation of the Alliance among other things. They assess four scenarios ranging them according to the extent of NATO's consolidation and operational capabilities. We cite here the last group of scenarios that implies a low level of NATO’s consolidation and operational capabilities. All other scenarios are present in our corpora as well. Игорь Истомин and Ирина Богова, "Будущее НАТО: Источники Неопределенности и Возможные Сцены Развития" (Москва, Российская Федерация: Фонд развития и поддержки Международного дискуссионного клуба «Валдай», October 2018), http://ru.valdaiclub.com/files/23349/
4.4 Further NATO expansions

Almost two-thirds of all excerpts that mention something about NATO’s future membership see the organization acquiring more members. Given Russia’s fairly consistent and vehement opposition to previous rounds of NATO expansion, this tells us something about their limited expectations for Russia’s actual future leverage over NATO decision-making. There is one author that expects NATO to lose members; something that has not yet happened in NATO’s 70-year existence, but for which there is a legal provision\(^\text{56}\) in Article XIII of the 1949 Washington Treaty. This idea appears in an article published in the Russian journal *Military Review* with a revealing title: “NATO on its way to disintegration”. The author emphasizes the discrepancies between the US and European countries that can lead the Alliance to become obsolete:

> “EU countries start to think that NATO membership may be not so important in the future. Taking into account recent hostile actions of the US towards Brussels, European governments may decide that Washington’s security umbrella will cost too much for them.”\(^\text{57}\)

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\(^{56}\) Note that there was no such specific provision in the foundational European treaties until the Lisbon Treaty in 2007 (with the now infamous Article 50). That Art XIII is not only a Russian preoccupation, can be inferred from Western speculations about a possible US withdrawal from NATO The Economist, “What Would Happen If America Left Europe to Fend for Itself?,” *The Economist*, March 14, 2019, [https://www.economist.com/special-report/2019/03/14/what-would-happen-if-america-left-europe-to-fend-for-itself](https://www.economist.com/special-report/2019/03/14/what-would-happen-if-america-left-europe-to-fend-for-itself)

When it comes to the question of NATO’s very existence in the future, the idea of NATO’s dissolution is a bit more popular than its continued existence: 6 out of 14 sources expect that NATO will survive while 8 think that it will cease to exist at some moment in the future (without giving any temporal indications). It is worth noting that on this we find quite starkly opposed views. On the one hand, we have Velimir Remich, a Serbian astrologist and self-proclaimed analyst, who is convinced of the bad destiny of NATO:

“In the future, NATO will fall apart”\(^\text{58}\)

This view is supported by Dmitry Rogozin, the vice-prime-minister in charge of the military-industrial complex at that time and former Russian permanent representative to NATO. Although he is a fairly radical far-right politician, Rogozin still represents the Russian government\(^\text{59}\) and powerful voices in the Russian establishment.

“Eventually NATO will fall apart because they do not have any purpose. NATO becomes bored when they have difficulties with creating an image of an enemy.”\(^\text{60}\)

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\(^\text{59}\) He is currently serving as the Director-General of Roskosmos - a state corporation responsible for a wide range and types of space flights and cosmonaut programs for the Russian Federation.

On the other hand, Valdai experts in their report argue that NATO will continue to play an important role in the future:

“NATO will continue to be the central institute for transatlantic coordination, guaranteeing the exercise of its members’ power to the neighboring regions.”

There is no clear trend in terms of the occupation of the authors and their position. Those who expect NATO to fall apart in the future come mostly from the media, but they are closely followed by military and policy experts. Academia comes in third place. The distribution of occupations for those who foresee NATO to survive in the future is the same.

Figure 8: Breakdown of type of authors discussing NATO’s future existence

4.6 The Alliance’s future capabilities

The last of the top-5 topics in the Russian corpus deals with NATO’s capabilities (in the broadest sense), which we operationalized as "the scope of capabilities at the Alliance’s disposal that undergird its effectiveness in the joint application of its coercive instruments". These include any resources that NATO, according to the authors, would be able, ready and willing to employ provided a need occurs: financial, military, manpower etc. 21 excerpts (14%) contained statements on this topic; 10 anticipate an increase in NATO’s capabilities, while 5 see a decline or a steady state.

The remaining 3 contained statements about the current capabilities of NATO, and another 4 did not contain any explicit judgements. Only a few claims regarding the current state of capabilities were given, and all 3 of them were negative.

### 4.7 NATO’s effectiveness

To unwrap important nuances in Russian discussions about NATO’s effectiveness, we developed two separate codes differentiating strategic from operational effectiveness. The former is designed to capture opinions regarding NATO’s performance at a general strategic level - will NATO achieve its strategic goals in any efforts it undertakes? The operational effectiveness code is narrower and focuses on the degree to which NATO is expected to be successful in carrying out its military missions and operations.

In the strategic sense, 2 excerpts expect NATO’s effectiveness to increase and 5 to remain stable. We found 4 positive assessments of the current general effectiveness of the Alliance and only 1 negative. It means that authors from our corpus mostly think that NATO will remain as effective as it is today. Positive (from NATO’s point of view) voices are found in news articles and expert materials; negative ones exclusively in the media. There is also one opinion that NATO is to become more effective, however, in a non-Russian academic source – the article written by Elman Nasirov and Khayal Iskandarov from Azerbaijan for the PfP Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes quarterly journal Connections.

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“Here we are talking about obtaining and maintaining competitive advantages – about a process that involves filling in gaps and, in particular, gaps, the creation of which in the future is threatened by a changing environment.”

Findings regarding operational effectiveness of NATO are also interesting. Contrary to the findings addressing the Alliance’s strategic effectiveness, Russian sources (3 excerpts) tend to contain negative assessments of NATO’s future operational prowess, claiming implicitly or explicitly that low operational effectiveness will prevail in the future. For example, Leonid Savin, chief editor of the media website Геополитика.Ру and a supporter of the Alexander Dugin's Fourth Political Theory, argues:

“[O]f course, as a military-political alliance, NATO could not and will not be able to prevent terrorist attacks in Western Europe carried out and planned by ISIS terrorists (the organization banned in Russia). Therefore, the balance of expenditures will shift towards national intelligence and preventive measures, rather than insanely expensive, yet useless, saber-rattling.”

Three other sources (BBC Russia citing United Kingdom Secretary of State for Defense Michael Fallon; Valdai club experts; and aforementioned Leonid Savin) also foresee NATO’s effectiveness to remain unchanged, departing, however, from different baseline assessments of the current developments (positive in case of Fallon and Sushentsov and negative in case of Savin). Finally, there are two mentions of alleged future improvement of NATO’s effectiveness in carrying out military missions coming from Valdai experts and Andrey Holtsov (Kyiv Institute of International Relations).

4.8 Role of NATO

To grasp the expected international role of NATO, we traced discussions on the range within the conflict spectrum in which NATO is expected to carry out missions. For this, we introduced a ‘Mission spectrum’ parent code with the three possible NATO values (child codes): 1) High spectrum – implies that NATO is likely to be equipped mostly for high-Intensity warfare and is likely to use hard power first and foremost; 2) Low spectrum – NATO is likely to switch more to activities with a minimum level of kinetic violence, such as influence operations, maritime interdiction of migrants, non-combatant evacuations; 3) High and Low spectrum – NATO is likely to be ready and willing to cover a full spectrum of activities, actively applying both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ power means.

As our analysis of the Russian corpus shows, most authors anticipate the alliance to be engaged in a full spectrum of military activities in the future (7 mentions). The hard-power scenario is found in 3 excerpts and the low-spectrum one in 2.
4.9 NATO’s influence

We also looked at what Russian-language sources think about NATO’s influence in the future, both in terms of its extent and area. Influence in our coding scheme stands for the extent to which NATO as an organization will continue to have international weight and ability to influence other (non-NATO) states. We identified 9 excerpts that discussed the trajectory of the Alliance’s influence in the future; 6 expect influence to increase. For example, Grigoriy Tishchenko from the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies expects that NATO will be spreading its influence to new domains:

“We see some danger in Alliance’s aspiration to guarantee permanent access to the global transport infrastructure, to take control of the world’s mineral resources and cyberspace.”

Only one author – Aleksei Krivopalov from the Centero (think tank that studies the crisis society) – expect NATO’s influence to decline, although in a very particular dimension:

“In the near future NATO will face difficulties with everything that concerns their capability to effectively exercise the power to the South-East of Ukraine.”

Two more authors – Aleksandr Bartosh from the Russian Academy of Military Science and Ivan Afanasenko from the Saint Petersburg State University of Economics – foresee that influence of the Alliance will remain stable.

Our findings on the topic of NATO’s area of influence are in line with the abovementioned trends. We identified 10 excerpts that touch upon the topic and only 1 of them thinks that the Alliance will exercise influence only within its borders. The authors of this excerpt are Valdai experts that discuss this possibility as one of the scenarios in their report “The Future of NATO: origins of uncertainty and possible scenarios”. Almost all of excerpts expect NATO to be either regional (4) or global (5). The former view is expressed by the same Valdai experts in another scenario:

“The probability is higher that the Euro Atlantic institutions will concentrate on putting in order the immediate neighborhood of the European Allies.”


67 Истомин и Богова, “Будущее НАТО.”
At the same time Grigoriy Tishchenko, who has already been mentioned, expects NATO to go global:

“The NATO Alliance ultimately transforms from the European one to the global under the guidance of the US.”

4.10 Intra-NATO cohesion

The “cohesion in the organization” code was developed to capture NATO cohesion in general, meaning broader intra-NATO agreement beyond the US-vs-’the rest’ relationship. This includes intra-EU-European disputes as well as relations with various NATO partners like Turkey or Canada.

Our findings suggest that there is no consensus in Russia about current intra-alliance cohesion. The opinions are distributed evenly: 3 excerpts (1 from the media and 2 by military/policy experts) suggest that there is more agreement between NATO members and the exact same amount of excerpts (this time 2 from the media and 1 by a military/policy expert) claim the opposite. As to the future tendencies, the foresight of more agreement in NATO is slightly dominating (4 mentions) than the expectations of deterioration of cooperation within NATO (3 mentions).

We also looked into what the sources say about decision-making in the organization, that is the extent to which the Alliance is able to make decisions on contentious issues. We collected 10 excerpts dedicated to this topic. Most of the excerpts (4) that evaluate the future trajectory foresee decision-making ability of organization to decline. For example, the author of the article “Putin cornered NATO” on the website putin-news.ru refers to the following words of Christoph Schilz from Die Welt:

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68 Тищенко, "Россия и Мир в 2017 году."
“The US is pressing European countries to increase payments for NATO defense expenditures. However, those refuse to pay and are thinking about the creation of a European army without Americans. This fuels the conflict inside the Alliance.”69

Only 1 excerpt expects the decision-making ability of NATO to increase and 1 to remain stable. In terms of future values, out of 3 excerpts 2 foresee the parameter to be low and 1 to be high.

On the topic of cohesion in the organization, military and political experts dominate the foresights. Media comes in second place except for the movement towards more agreement; here the number of representatives of academia surpasses the one of journalists. Decrease of decision-making ability of the organization is expected almost exclusively by military and political experts, whereas all authors that foresee increase are from media.

4.11 Political-military balance

We identified what Russian-language sources think about the balance between political and military nature of the Alliance in the future. This topic was not very popular (only 6 excerpts), but we still can identify a certain pattern here. One excerpt touched upon the subject, but did not answer our question (whether NATO will be more inclined to be political or military organization), just stating that the Alliance would remain the main military power in Europe and would dedicate more effort than now to develop other components – political and informational. Another one expects that there will be a balance between the political and military nature of NATO. 4 out of 6 excerpts foresee that NATO will be shifted more to the political aspect of its activities. For example, the Valdai experts in their report “The Future of NATO: origins of uncertainty and possible scenarios” argue the following:

“Even if the American commitment to the European affairs declines, NATO will persist as an institute of political coordination that guarantees support of democracy within the West.”

Despite the quite popular meme of NATO aggressiveness and possible military clash between Russia and NATO, nobody in our corpus expected that the military nature of NATO will prevail over the political one.

Figure 16: Breakdown of type of authors discussing the political vs. military nature of NATO

4.12 Aspects we didn’t find

A final Russian finding pertains to futuribles that, to our surprise, we either did not find, or only to a much smaller extent anticipated.

A first one concerns whether NATO’s actions will take place in accordance with the international law. Russia never ceases hammering the issue of NATO’s ‘unlawful’ activities in areas like Kosovo. We therefore expected that this might be an important topic in their discussion about NATO’s future. To trace Russian views on this topic we designed the “legality” tag. Only two issue-related statements could be found back identified in the Russian corpus. One by a Russian military/policy expert source (year 2012) suggesting that NATO’s actions will violate the principles of international law in the future. According to another one (an academic source, 2017), NATO’s actions will be rather of questionable legality. Nobody suggests that the alliance’s future behavior is likely to comply with international law.

Another – partially related – topic that is often emphasized in Russian debates about NATO’s historical or contemporary developments is the Alliance’s tendency to operate far beyond its borders. We identified only 3 excerpts in our corpus, and these do not show any trend. One excerpt authored by Leonid Savin, chief editor of the media website Геополитика.Ру, elaborates on how current US involvement in Syria affects NATO. And the Valdai experts, in two excerpts, expect that NATO will not conduct their operations globally, but will limit its area of operations to its own neighborhood. The number of mentions of this topic is too low to draw conclusions from that.

4.13 Main Russian takeaways

- There is surprisingly scant attention to NATO’s future in Russia’s deliberations about its future security environment.
- The future of the NATO-Russia relationship is sketched in quite stark tones. There is an expectation of continued future conflict that might even escalate into a military clash, with very few authors expecting cooperation between the parties in the future.
- NATO is not expected to be substituted by any kind of a European army, although Putin himself has expressed support for this idea (with ‘support’ of course being different from ‘expectation’).

• Russian foresight on NATO fully anticipates further enlargements in the future, but not to the post-Soviet space. Ukraine seems to be a particular neuralgic area, as it is repeated multiple times that that country is not welcomed within NATO.
• The discrepancies between the US and European Allies are foreseen to damage the transatlantic link, leading to a situation whereby US leadership is decreasing, but still remaining stronger than its European counterparts.
• There is no consensus on NATO’s survival, but the single Russian government official (who spent 3 years in Brussels as Russia’s ambassador to NATO) claims that the Alliance will disappear.
• There is an expectation, especially from experts, that the Alliance’s capabilities and its general strategic effectiveness will increase, but that is not the case for NATO’s operational effectiveness.
• NATO’s future mission spectrum is seen as being ‘full-spectrum’.
• The influence of the Alliance is expected to increase and to exercise power either regionally or globally.
• Opinions about the alliance’s future cohesion future are split almost evenly, but its decision-making ability is expected to decline.
• A future NATO is seen to be more of a political than a military Alliance.
• Russian authors are no longer interested in the question of legality of NATO’s actions, although it has been a popular topic after the bombings of Yugoslavia and Iraq. The topic of NATO’s area of operation did not attract much interest from Russian-language sources as well.
• Across the corpus we notice the difference between the authors from the expert community and from the media. The latter mostly think negatively of the future of NATO in different aspects, while the former in majority expect improvement for the Alliance in the future. This divergence is especially reflected in 3 topics: transatlantic link, US leadership and credibility, possible accession of Ukraine to NATO.
5. Conclusion

This study represents an attempt to take a more systematic look at how two key actors in the international system view NATO’s future(s). In this final section, we present some concluding remarks on three topics: the main differences and similarities between the two language domains; the puzzle of the paucity of sources; and the promise and peril of this type of analysis.

5.1 Comparison

Our analysis revealed some interesting similarities and differences between the two language domains.

Authors in both China and Russia expect a decline in transatlantic unity. In China, very few authors think that NATO will disintegrate in the future. In the Russian corpus, on the other hand, a small majority of authors expect NATO’s dissolution.

Despite Trump’s multiple attacks on the Transatlantic Alliance, Chinese authors do not doubt the commitment of the US to NATO. Their Russian counterparts expect US leadership and credibility to decrease, which inevitably means less commitment to the transatlantic affairs from the White House. Both Chinese and Russians expect the US to remain the leading force in the alliance with Europe.

Chinese authors do not write much about the competition of their own country with NATO. Instead, they position Russia as the main threat to the Alliance. In that respect, they mirror the Russian authors; two-thirds of the excerpts related to the relations between Russian and NATO foresee conflict or even armed conflict between them in the future.

In both corpora the opinion prevails that Europe will boost its defense capabilities up to the creation of a European army. However, Chinese as well as Russian authors think that even if such army will be created, it will not substitute, but instead merely supplement NATO. Therefore, the Transatlantic Alliance is seen by both countries as remaining the leading force guaranteeing European security and the European Union is expected to remain highly dependent on NATO.
5.2 Why so few sources?

The single most striking finding of this research effort is the scant attention that both countries demonstrably devote to the topic of NATO’s future. This did not come as a big surprise for the Chinese case, but it did for the Russian one – for which significantly more efforts were dispensed in order to unearth relevant sources. Given the almost iconic role the Alliance plays in Russia’s security thinking and planning to this very day, one might reasonably expect that quite some (also creative) thinking would take place in Russia about the Alliance’s future. That does not appear to be the case, at least not in the public domain. This is especially disappointing because in previous multilingual MetaFore-studies, HCSS has typically found a number of counterintuitive findings that could assist Western decision-makers in stress-testing some of their assumptions, and maybe reveal some Achilles-heels in their strategic planning. What could possibly explain this relative neglect of this topic? We would like to suggest some hypotheses that, by their very nature, remain to be fully corroborated, but that might still serve as possible ‘mental explanatory anchors’.

A first possible hypothesis is connected to the recentist and presentist bias of most of the defense and security discourse across the world. Both military and diplomatic planners spend most of their time and energy in their day-to-day ‘inboxes’ – on emergencies, ongoing conflicts, negotiations; or on various inward-looking domestic bureaucratic and/or political processes and agendas. This leaves little bandwidth a future-oriented, creative and – most importantly – outside-in look at various issues. We would submit that this hypothesis applies not only to the two countries analyzed in this study, but to the overwhelming majority of all countries – including NATO countries themselves.

A second hypothesis has to do with the nature of these two countries’ political regimes. Strategic foresight seems to only thrive in certain environments. We unfortunately have too little systematic empirical evidence to assess the precise preconditions for not only high-quality foresight, but especially for successful or at least useful outcomes from it. We see foresight thriving in different environments. Many of these advantages are still widely underappreciated. In our experience, an extremely important one is that various key topics that may be too sensitive to think through when positioned in the here and now may become debatable when positioned in an (especially) longer-term, more anonymized and ‘safer’ future.

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The most widely acclaimed case is probably Singapore, a small advanced economy like that is only partially democratic but has a uniquely foresightful elite that has empowered a competent and unusually meritocratic civil service to mainstream foresight throughout government in most policy domains. Europe as a whole, the EU as a geostrategic actor *sui generis*, and a few small European advanced liberal democracies in particular (with Finland, the Scandinavian countries as well as the Netherlands probably leading the pack; every one of these with different strengths and weaknesses) have also managed to blend a few of their particular characteristics into a relatively successful potion that has kept them at the top of many international rankings. The final categorical ‘success story’ is the United States, whose (until recently) stellar and open higher educational, knowledge, entrepreneurial and – arguably – ideational prowess still puts a number of its technology centers of excellence at the cutting edge of (especially technological) innovation. The (growing) authoritarian bent of both the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China may be one of the explanations why foresight has a harder time to take root there.

A third hypothesis is related to what one might call the ‘systemic importance’ of certain countries. Globally systemically important countries have few alternatives but to build a ‘knowledge backbone’ that is commensurate with their position. They – and arguably only they – have both the incentive and the wherewithal to develop such a broad knowledge infrastructure (also) in the areas of foreign, security and defense analysis. In the Cold War period, for instance, only the United States and the Soviet Union had such an infrastructure, which also included a sizeable foresight component. In the US, influential research institutions like the RAND Corporation, the Hudson Institute and others played an important role in this. Also, in the Soviet Union, armed forces in the guise of военное (-политическое) прогнозирование (‘military(-political) forecasting’), foresight played an important and influential role in the various corridors of power of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. That Soviet intellectual capital in this area clearly atrophied in the Yeltsin-period, as many of the brightest officers moved onto greener, more lucrative pastures. It remains as yet unclear whether any of this creativity is re-emerging in the once again more assertive, but factually still equally economically (and, at least in the eyes of most Western analysts, also politically, societally and regionally) anemic Russian Federation, which can hardly be called systemic by any but territorial criteria. The PRC here finds itself

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75 In the financial sector the term ‘systemically important bank’ (in the popular vernacular: “banks that are too big to fail”) stands for a financial institution whose systemic risk profile is deemed to be of such importance that its failure would trigger a wider financial crisis and threaten the very nature of the global system. The U.S. bank Lehman Brothers, whose collapse was one of the first effects of the 2008-09 financial crisis, is a clear example of this. In political science, and more specifically in the field of international relations, a more popular concept is that of a ‘pole’ - a concept that mostly fits in the ‘realist’ paradigm, in which the ‘pole’ is often seen as intrinsically inimical to other poles or as ‘attracting’ other countries to its side. But we would still submit that the ‘systemic bank’ analogy is an interesting one in this field also, as those systemic players could be seen as having certain systemic responsibilities.


77 Dreyer and Stang.
in the exact opposite position. It did not have this ‘systemic’ infrastructure in the Cold War, but its ascendant systemic importance is clear to everybody. Many of its strategic defense and security choices over the past decade\textsuperscript{78} arguably show far more strategic (and certainly value-for-money) ingenuity than their Russian counterparts. The Chinese military may still be interested in buying the more ‘symmetric’ Russian weapon systems that the resurgent remnants of the Soviet military-industrial complex are able to produce, but in asymmetric (strategic) terms, the Russian military is increasingly learning from their Chinese counterparts.

A fourth hypothesis we could venture has to do with the fact that this report is only based on ‘public’ Chinese and Russian information. It might be possible – and even probable – that more and/or richer views on the future of NATO or the transatlantic relationship could be found in the classified realm. In our own experience with foresight within the Netherlands and a few other European countries, within the EU and within NATO, however, the real foresight-related sensitivities lie much less with the future external strategic environment, than with military-operational planning and, maybe even more so, with domestic political nervousness.

Finally, it may be important to acknowledge that the respect for multilateralism in general and for certain international organizations in specific that we may deem self-evident has never been shared by the leaders of more traditional great powers. Europe, and especially the European Union, as such is a profoundly incomprehensible phenomenon to these leaders. NATO may be slightly more familiar to them as a powerful military player that can affect them, but then not so much as an institution, than as the combined power of a number of powerful countries. In that sense, they may be more focused on the future of the US, or of Germany, the UK or France than on the future of NATO as an institution.

5.3 Getting serious about the future – towards a FutureBase

The policymaking community puts ever more emphasis on basing policy on objective evidence (‘evidence-based policy’). But what is the equivalent for the future of what ‘evidence’ is for the past and present? This report is based on the HCSS Metafore approach, which we have also called ‘foresight 3.0’;\textsuperscript{79} an attempt to distil more insights


about the future(s) by systematically collecting, parsing, visualizing and analyzing a large database with a range of aspects of the future (‘futuribles’) as they are perceived across the globe. This global ‘futurebase’ should give policy analysts and policymakers a chance to gauge the bandwidth of views on these futuribles across different constituencies, languages and cultures. Such an approach may allow us to transcend some of the widely acknowledged bias problems with many current approaches to foresight.

Foresight is an essential aspect of strategy development. Foresight helps organizations in anticipating change, in navigating the dynamic environment and, most importantly, in making decisions that offer a better chance at keeping them ahead of others. Many public and private organizations are aware that new insights can be gained from looking at the future in a more systematic way. They see value in both the deliverables of foresight, but especially also in the very process of engaging groups of people, widening their views, having discussions amongst decision makers, and influencing the thinking processes within the organization which may spread out to actors in their transactional context.

But while the value of foresight is widely acknowledged, there are also equally widely accepted limitations. Many of those have to do with the subjectivity of the process. Foresight often used to be (and often continues to be) done by individual experts or by prestigious institutions (‘Foresight 1.0’). The purpose of these foresight studies was typically to produce an authoritative view of ‘the’ future, based on their own (undocumented) selection of useful sources and excerpts and their own (claimed) deep knowledge of the topic and of the plausible future. The (presumed) quality of their view of the future was derived from the singular authority the expert(s) wielded in their field.

The starting point for the HCSS MetaFore protocol is to overcome the subjectivity and normative aspects of foresight studies. By trying to collect a pool of foresight studies that is as exhaustive as possible – also and maybe even especially from other language domains – the approach tries to capture a broader bandwidth of views than is possible when one works within one, implicitly biased viewpoint. The coding process of surgically identifying and dissecting the different futuribles that are mentioned in various foresight reports helps to reveal the dominant themes in the foresight studies. It shows the way certain drivers of change are discussed, which stakeholders are involved and many other aspects of meaning that are important in these foresight studies.

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It also reveals the blind spots of themes that are discussed in certain language zones but ignored in other parts of the world. In this sense, meta-foresight offers decisionmakers a better chance to gain a multi-perspective approach. The insights can be truly refreshing and may trigger deeper drilldowns into the riches of these multiple futures.

The importance of this to policymakers cannot be underestimated. We submit that ‘foresight 3.0’ approaches such as the one presented and illustrated in this document represent the ‘futures’ equivalent of the unbiased ‘evidence’ that is increasingly becoming the basis of policymaking. Any prudent strategic decision maker would be well-advised to carefully stress-test the robustness of her strategic decisions against as broad a segment of the entire (theoretical) futurespace as she can absorb. Multilingual approaches will increasingly play a key role in this.

Despite these unique advantages with respect to strategic policy making, multilingual meta-analysis also has some inherent drawbacks. Policymakers often miss the linear ‘narrative’ quality of scenarios that they can fully absorb. What we have therefore done in other work,\textsuperscript{81} is to use the distribution of views on various parts of the future (futuribles) and the factors and clusters that tend to emerge from it to construct scenario ensembles that can then be ‘narrated’ in a more conventional way.

Foresight 2.0 – typically based on collaborative scenario-exercises – is particularly valued by public and private actors for its ability to trigger a strategic discussion about the future or about how decisions in the present can or should be inspired, hedged, etc. by some stress-testing against a small number of ‘chewable’ futures. In the defense and security world, it is even used more (‘hard’) analytically than (‘soft’) discursively to generate and prioritize robust options across a broader scenario-space. In comparison to the discursive process focused on a set of scenarios, foresight 3.0 confronts decision makers with much more uncertainty, which is both useful (as it may prepare them better) but also more challenging as most humans feel distinctly uncomfortable with uncertainty – both at a cognitive and an emotional level.

Finally, it should be noted that the MetaFore or foresight 3.0 methodology remains young and very much in development. Currently, manual coding still lies at the heart of the data analysis, which brings limitations in time constraints, human error, subjectivity and cognitive fallacies. In other (non-foresight-related) work, HCSS is currently pushing the envelope of much more automated ways of extracting semantic meaning out of text that can also be applied to foresight work in a way that can support strategic policy making by constantly generating new insights into the future.

6. Bibliography


NATO's Futures through Russian and Chinese Beholders' Eyes


NATO’s Futures through Russian and Chinese Beholders’ Eyes


Annex 1: Method

The first step was to iteratively construct queries in both languages that would be as similar as possible. Experimental queries were applied to number of available multilingual search engines as well as bibliometric and full-text databases (Google Search, Dimensions, Lens, Web of Science, Google Scholar, Baidu) to discover the search query terms that would allow us to identify documents with the highest possible signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) and number of relevant results. We compiled a list of words and phrases relevant to our topic, combined those in search queries, ran those on the search engines and databases, documented the SNR outcome for those queries, and then refined them iteratively until the search results were found to be satisfactory (or any attempts of further improvement failed). In the end, we converged on two broadly similar queries in both languages, with the resulting query – in the case of Google Search being the following:

**Russian:** "будущее НАТО" OR "НАТО в будущем" OR "в будущем НАТО" OR "Перспективы НАТО" OR "прогноз * НАТО" OR "дальнейшее существование НАТО" OR "НАТО через * лет" OR "что будет с НАТО" OR "развития НАТО" OR "сценарии * НАТО" OR "судьба НАТО" OR "членство России в НАТО"

**Chinese:** "北约*发展" OR "北约*命运" OR "北约*存在" OR "北约*前景" OR "北约*未 OR "北约*前途" OR "北约*动向" OR "北约*趋势" OR "北约*演变" OR "北约*危机" OR "未来*北约" OR "对北约*预测" OR "预测北约"

However, as Dimensions, Lens, and Web of Science support more complex query syntax, and given their turnout was usually low, to them we applied a different query (much more in line with our original intent) when searching for Russian documents:

("будущее" OR "перспективы" OR "сценарии" OR "развит" OR "судьба") AND ("НАТО" OR "Альянс" OR "Североатлант")

The Chinese query initially yielded 98 results and was narrowed down to sources dated within the time frame of 1 January 2017 through 24 March 2019 (83 results). The Russian queries varied by the platform where the search was conducted (Google Search, Dimensions, Lens, and Web of Science), and ultimately 389 full-text documents for the timespan of January 2008 – March 2019 were downloaded. Both corpora were manually filtered to exclude duplicates and irrelevant texts.
Thus, the final number of Chinese sources analyzed was 29. The Russian sources were narrowed down to 78, though ultimately only 59 were coded, with the rest proving to be largely irrelevant.

The Chinese sources were analyzed using a set of eight parameters, the outcomes of which have been worked into this document’s six headers under “Findings.” For an overview of the parameters and their outcomes the parameter analysis sheet is included separately. In addition, the appendix document holds the search query, its filtered list of results, and a list of quotes in original Chinese.

The documents in Russian were uploaded and manually coded in the research software Dedoose. First the shallow coding was done to identify the relevant text excerpts, which became the main units of analysis. Then we developed a 3-level tree of parameters for the ‘deep’ coding: originally a set of 17 of general parameters/topics (Root codes), and then 142 more specific ones (Level 2 and 3 codes). These codes were manually applied to the excerpts previously tagged as Relevant. After the tagging was complete, the excerpts and the codes applied to them were exported into a dataset, to be used for visualization and analysis, the output of which can be found in “Russian findings” section and Annex 4.

**Query construction**

Before collecting the texts for the study, we needed to develop a search query that would yield the best results in terms of signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) and the quantity of results. We chose Google as our primary search platform, as its number of indexed pages is still unmatched by any competition. Google, however, like most of the free search engines, imposes severe limitations on the query size and syntax complexity, which meant we had to maneuver and compromise while developing our search query, and the results would still not be perfect. To make matters even more complicated for us, Google is very covert about its search parser behavior, information from the 3rd parties' blogs is contradictory, and testing queries is rather hard due to inconsistent behavior.

For instance, Google has an implicit limitation of the query size, by transcending which one will either get wrong results or no results at all. The other major problem was that Boolean OR operators (which serve as means to delimit alternative terms, e.g. “NATO OR “North-Atlantic Treaty Organization”” will find all pages containing either one of the n-grams divided by “OR”) cannot be grouped by parentheses. On top of that, some other useful operations (like proximity search) are completely unsupported by Google.

**Chinese**

Our original idea was to make a good translation of the final Russian query (for example, involving a native speaker for it) and then running this query in two search engines –
Google Search and Baidu. Baidu is the most prominent search engine in China and we wanted to run our query there as well, because access to Google is restricted in China. Other suggested sources included journal database organized by Tsinghua university, list of sources in China compiled by Duke University, etc., but were turned down.

In the first spiral we tried our query in Google experimenting with Boolean operators and characters. Due to very low SNR we went to the second spiral that included time and region delimiters for Google Search. Simultaneously we experimented with Baidu and came to the conclusion that it was not a viable option.

Our final query was the following:

“北约*发展” OR “北约*命运” OR “北约*存在” OR “北约*前景” OR “北约*未来” OR “北约*前景” OR “北约*动向” OR “北约*趋势” OR “北约*演变” OR “北约*危机” OR “未来*北约” OR “对北约*预测” OR “预测北约”

“*” characters were used as placeholders for possible occurrences of other words in the phrases. We realized that this set of phrases was far from exhaustive, and we might have overlooked the articles which spoke of the Future of NATO in different terms, but it allowed us to get a decent SNR.

In the end we narrowed down the timespan to 2 years (1 January 2017 – 24 March 2019).

**Russian**

Our initial plan involved the creation of two sets of words, one with words referring to NATO (“НАТО”, “Альянс”, “Североатлантический договор” and others synonyms typically used in Russian media and policy/academic publications), and the other with synonyms for “future” (“будущее”, “в будущем”, “сценарии”, “судьба”, “горизонт” etc.). These two sets should have been divided into two parts, each member of which joined by Boolean OR, and the parts joined by Boolean AND. The query, which structure would have been similar to (“НАТО” OR “Альянс” OR “Североатлантический договор”) AND (“будущее” OR “в будущем” OR “сценарии” OR “судьба” OR “горизонт”), would have yielded pages where any members of each part co-occur. After testing the query thoroughly, we agreed that Google did not function the way we intended, and therefore we scrapped the plan. The idea, however, was not completely renounced, as we used the query in Lens, Dimensions and Web of Science, all of which support more sophisticated syntax than typical general-purpose search services. The query for them looks like this:

(“будущее” OR “перспективы” OR “сценарии” OR “развит*” OR “судьба”) AND (“НАТО” OR “Альянс” OR “Североатлант*”)
As for Google, we also explored some simplistic options: just scraping the search terms together and dividing them either by spaces (which default to Boolean AND in Google) or by ORs. Predictably, the first yielded way too many results with abysmal SNR, the second had much fewer results, but also a lackluster SNR.

After more rounds of trial and error, we decided to make several expressions, putting them in quotes (used for exact phrase matching in most search engines) and separating by Boolean OR. Thus our final was the following:

«будущее НАТО» OR "НАТО в будущем" OR "в будущем НАТО" OR "Перспективы НАТО" OR "прогноз * НАТО" OR "дальнейшее существование НАТО" OR "НАТО через * лет" OR "что будет с НАТО" OR "развития НАТО" OR "сценарии * НАТО" OR "судьба НАТО" OR "членство России в НАТО"

“*” characters were used as placeholders for possible occurrences of other words in the phrases. We realized that this set of phrases was far from exhaustive, and we might have overlooked the articles which spoke of the Future of NATO in different terms, but it allowed us to get a decent SNR.

Finally, we chose a timespan of the last 11 years (January 2008 - February (later March) 2019, when the search was conducted) for our search to capture the more recent.

Data sources queried

Chinese

The initial query on Google Search yielded 98 results and was narrowed down to sources dated within the time frame of 1 January 2017 through 24 March 2019 (83 results). The corpus was further filtered manually to exclude repetitions, irrelevant pages and Chinese language content on platforms of foreign organizations. Paywalled sources were also excluded. The final number of sources analyzed is 29.

We also tried to experiment with Baidu. The initial query yielded 19 pages of results with many repetitions and very low signal-to-noise ratio (SNR). We used 5 more different queries, all of them gave us many results, but with very low SNR still (both in absolute terms and comparing to Google Search). Eventually we gave up on the idea of using Baidu to build our Chinese corpus.

Russian

Search yielded 129 unique results in Google, 394 in Dimensions, 34 in Lens and 16 in Web of Science. Full texts of all documents with open access were downloaded. The initial
check revealed there were 78 articles relevant to the subject of our inquiry, which we then proceeded to upload to the Dedoose application for manual coding. Of these 78, we ended up using 59, as the rest appeared to be irrelevant during the coding process.

The corpora

The Chinese language domain

The top-ranked Chinese sources were mostly editorials from state media. These state media editorials were also most numerous, accounting for thirty percent of the total. Of these sources five were originally published in either the National Defense News (中国国防报) or the People’s Liberation Army Daily (解放军). On the whole, the sources from non-state media (20% of the total) were more likely to be less opinionated news articles. The remainder is mostly made up of sources are classified as “blogs,” state media news articles, or sources published on state-affiliated platforms (i.e. a Ministry and a research institute website).

![Figure 17: Breakdown of type of author for the Chinese sources](image)
The Russian language domain

The vast majority of the (used) sources in Russian language were of Russian authorship – 54 of 59. There were a couple of authors not from Russia: a professor from a Ukrainian university and Sputnik Azerbaijan. Three more sources belonged to the Russian offices of international organizations – BBC, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (‘Radio svoboda’), and a journal of the Partnership for Peace Consortium.

The occupation of the authors was much more diverse. Large part of them represented media – either news sites, newspapers, or blogs (46). Academics came second (20), followed by military and policy experts from think tanks (11). There was also one author from the Russian executive branch of power, namely Sergey Lavrov, the Minister for foreign affairs.

Figure 18: Breakdown to country of origin for the Russian sources

In addition to articles, we also assigned authorship codes (‘Source country’ and ‘Occupation’) to the excerpts which were credited to different authors (e.g. quotes by experts, commentaries of official bodies etc.). The breakdown of the excerpts by these demographic codes is shown in the graph below and gives an insight into whom the authors of the articles cite most frequently.
Coding

Chinese

We determined 8 topics that we wanted to study in the Chinese corpora. These topics were expressed in the form of the following questions and statements: “Will NATO continue to exist?” “The US government’s attitude towards NATO is a source of instability”, “The EU is moving toward development of a more independent unified European defense”, “Internal strife is a major problem in NATO (including budget)”, “The source emphasizes rising external challenges”, “The source mentions a role for China”, “The source mentions non-traditional threats (cyber, hybrid warfare)”, “The source mentions NATO expansion/globalization”.

Russian

In the following step we needed to organize the documents in such a way that would have allowed us to see a high-level overview of their content. For this purpose, we used Dedoose\textsuperscript{82}, a program designed for organization and qualitative analysis of documents (surveys or texts) through application of codes.

\textsuperscript{82} Dedoose, Dedoose, Web Application for Managing, Analyzing, and Presenting Qualitative and Mixed Method Research Data.
We started with the “shallow” coding, i.e. annotated all excerpts that we agreed were relevant to the subject so that we did not have to re-read all texts again when re-doing or checking each other’s coding. After that we proceeded to the construction of the “deep” coding tree. We had already done numerous projects\(^83\), mostly within MetaFore approach\(^84\), that included manual coding of multilingual sources. Therefore, we agreed that we could use the coding scheme applied in 2006 “Future NATOs” article\(^85\) as a foundation of our own coding tree. We, however, reshaped and augmented it to capture as much relevant information as possible.

The resulting coding tree has 3 levels, with Level 1 (Root level) codes capturing the most general topics (or parameters) found across the corpus (“Area”, “Authorship”, “Capabilities”, “Cohesion in the organization”, “Cool quotes”, “Decision-making/institutional cohesion”, “General effectiveness”, “Influence”, “Legality”, “Mission spectrum”, “Operational effectiveness”, “Political vs. military nature”, “Scenario probability”, “Standpoint in relation to other bodies”, “Transatlantic link”, “US leadership and credibility”, “Will NATO survive”). Under the Root codes, Level 2 codes were used to specify either a subtopic (e.g., one of the Level 2 codes under “Area” was “Of influence”) or a variable (e.g. “Capabilities” – “Trajectory”). Finally, Level 3 codes were used for concrete values (e.g. “Capabilities” – “Trajectory” – “Increase”). All Level 2 and 3 codes were marked with one- or two- capital letter tags for the ease of use and recognition.

Our coding scheme aimed at capturing value judgements that the authors gave on the aforementioned subjects, and thus we decided to split several codes into “current” (‘baseline’ – coded low-high) and “dynamic” (‘future trend’, coded as (increase-decrease-remain stable) aspects where appropriate. For instance, such Root codes as “Cohesion in the organization” and “General effectiveness” contained two underlying Level 2’s: Value (to code “current” evaluations, e.g. “Is high to medium”, “Is at a low level”) and Trajectory (to code statements regarding the change, e.g. “Will increase”, “Is going to remain the same”).

A full table of codes (with Root and Level 2 descriptions) can be found in Annex 2. Below is a schematic fragment of the coding tree hierarchy (the visual representation of the whole coding tree, too big to fit in the paper, is available \[here\]).


\(^84\) For details, see De Spiegeleire, Van Duijne, and Chivot, “Towards Foresight 3.0.” and De Spiegeleire, The HCSS Metafore Protocol.

\(^85\) De Spiegeleire and Korteweg, “Future NATOs.”
Figure 20: Part of the coding scheme (breakdown into 'futuribles') for the analysis of Russian sources

**Visualization**

Having coded the parameters, we needed to visualize them for the convenience of analysis. Dedoose features quite a few options of data visualization, but we did not find them sufficient (and sometimes visually appealing) enough, and therefore decided to do at least a part of the visualization in a different software. Tableau\(^{86}\) was chosen for this purpose.

However, despite Dedoose allowing to export the project data to be used in other tools, we first needed to reshape the data, for which we wrote a script in Python programming language. The final table with data is accessible through this link.
Annex 2: Language-domain sources used for the analysis

Chinese


中华必亮剑天天时事 [China will shine the sword every day]. “中华必亮剑天天时事-特朗普还想退群？这次，轮到西方国家炸锅了! [Trump Still Wants to Leave the Group? This Time, It Is the Turn of the Western Countries].” Collection of China’s Bianjian personal blog. 中华必亮剑天天时事 [China will shine the sword every day], January 19, 2016. http://blog.bljcn.com/cnbj/d29c3e57043.html.


“伊万卡·特朗普在慕尼黑安全会议上一路领先 [ Ivanka Trump Leads the Way at the Munich Security Conference].” tellechen.com, February 16, 2019. https://www.tellerchina.com/news/%E4%BA%AE%4B%88%87%E5%8D%8A%E2%B7%E7%89%B9%E6%9C%97%E6%99%AE%E5%9C%A8%E6%85%85%E5%BC%9B%E9%BB%91%E5%AE%89%E5%85%A8%E4%BC%9A%E8%AE%AE%E4%B8%8A%E4%B8%80%E8%B7%AF%E9%A2%86%E5%85%88_-Byvg-sSBE.html.


唐风宋韵 [Tang Feng], and 企鹅号 [Song Yun]. ”俄罗斯列装4款超强火炮, 摆明针对美国和北约, 存在多个共同点 [Russia Has Installed Four Super-Strong Artillery Pieces, Which Have Many Commonalities with the United States and NATO].” Tencent QQ is an instant messaging software service and web portal developed by the Chinese tech giant Tencent. qq.com, December 16, 2017. https://new.qq.com/omn/20171216/20171216A09RC0.html.


NATO’s Futures through Russian and Chinese Beholders’ Eyes


Russian


# Annex 3: Coding scheme applied to the Russian corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root code</th>
<th>Root code description</th>
<th>Level 2 code</th>
<th>Level 2 code description</th>
<th>Level 3 code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>spatial/territorial aspects of NATO’s functioning</td>
<td>(AR) Of expansion/</td>
<td>whether NATO is going</td>
<td>(AR)(EX) Fewer members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>membership</td>
<td>to accept new members or</td>
<td>(AR)(EX) More members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>will lose the old ones</td>
<td>(AR)(EX) Remain of the same size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(AR) Of influence</td>
<td>geographical extent to</td>
<td>(AR)(IN) Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>which NATO will be able</td>
<td>(AR)(IN) Internal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to exert its influence</td>
<td>(AR)(IN) Regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(not on member-countries)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(AR) Of operations</td>
<td>geographical extent to</td>
<td>(AR)(OP) Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>which NATO will be able</td>
<td>(AR)(OP) Regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to conduct its operations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorship</td>
<td>info on the credited author of a given sentence/paragraph/quote within an article</td>
<td>(A) Occupation</td>
<td>what is the author’s occupation?</td>
<td>(A)(O) Academic/academic body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(A)(O) Executive/executive body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(A)(O) Journalist/media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(A)(O) Judicial official/body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(A)(O) Legislative official/body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(A)(O) Military officer/military body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(A)(O) Military or policy expert/institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(A)(O) Politician/political institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(A) Source country</td>
<td>from what country does</td>
<td>(A)(S) Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the author come?</td>
<td>(A)(S) Russian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capabilities</td>
<td>the scope of capabilities at the Alliance’s disposal that undergird its effectiveness in the joint application of its coercive instruments</td>
<td>(CP) Trajectory</td>
<td>Dynamic variable</td>
<td>(CP)(T) Decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CP)(T) Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CP)(T) Remain stable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CP) Value=present</td>
<td>Static variable</td>
<td>(CP)(VP) High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CP)(VP) Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CP)(VP) Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion in the organization</td>
<td>is there more agreement or disagreement in NATO?</td>
<td>(CO) Trajectory</td>
<td>Dynamic variable</td>
<td>(CO)(T) Movement towards more agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CO)(T) Movement towards more disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CO)(T) Undefined trend/both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CO) Value=present</td>
<td>Static variable</td>
<td>(CO)(VP) Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CO)(VP) More agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CO)(VP) More disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool quotes</td>
<td>excerpts that we find interesting on their own</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NATO’s Futures through Russian and Chinese Beholders’ Eyes | 61
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root code</th>
<th>Root code description</th>
<th>Level 2 code</th>
<th>Level 2 code description</th>
<th>Level 3 code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making/ institutional cohesion</td>
<td>the extent to which the Alliance is able to make decisions on contentious issues; institutional cohesion stance</td>
<td>(DC) Trajectory</td>
<td>Dynamic variable</td>
<td>(DC)(T) Decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(DC)(T) Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(DC)(T) Remain stable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(DC) Value=future</td>
<td>Static variable</td>
<td>(DC)(VF) High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(DC)(VF) Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(DC)(VF) Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General effectiveness</td>
<td>to apply when the authors speak about NATO's performance on a very general level or in very vivid terms</td>
<td>(GE) Trajectory</td>
<td>Dynamic variable</td>
<td>(GE)(T) Decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(GE)(T) Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(GE)(T) Remain stable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(GE) Value=future</td>
<td>Static variable</td>
<td>(GE)(VF) High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(GE)(VF) Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(GE)(VF) Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(GE) Value=present</td>
<td>Static variable</td>
<td>(GE)(VP) High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(GE)(VP) Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(GE)(VP) Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>the extent to which NATO as an organization will continue to have international weight and ability to influence others (non-NATO) states</td>
<td>(I) Trajectory</td>
<td>Dynamic variable</td>
<td>(I)(T) Decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(I)(T) Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(I)(T) Remain stable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(I) Value=present</td>
<td>Static variable</td>
<td>(I)(VP) High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(I)(VP) Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(I)(VP) Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legality</td>
<td>presumed legality of the actions in accordance to the international law</td>
<td>(LE) Illegal</td>
<td>NATO will perform illegal actions</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(LE) Legal</td>
<td>NATO will perform legal actions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(LE) Questionable legality</td>
<td>The legality of the actions NATO will perform will be questionable</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission spectrum</td>
<td>the range within the conflict spectrum in which NATO will carry out missions</td>
<td>(MS) High and Low spectrum</td>
<td>NATO will be ready for high-Intensity warfare and less for non-combat missions (maritime interdiction of migrants, evacuation, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(MS) High spectrum</td>
<td>NATO will be only willing to engage in missions which involve less or next to no kinetic violence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(MS) Low spectrum</td>
<td>NATO will be ready for any kind of missions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational effectiveness</td>
<td>a degree to which NATO is expected to be successful in carrying out military missions</td>
<td>(OE) Trajectory</td>
<td>Dynamic variable</td>
<td>(OE)(T) Decrease</td>
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<td>(OE)(T) Increase</td>
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<td>(OE)(T) Remain stable</td>
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<td>(OE) Value=future</td>
<td>Static variable</td>
<td>(OE)(VF) High</td>
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<td>(OE)(VF) Medium</td>
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<td>(OE) Value=present</td>
<td>Static variable</td>
<td>(OE)(VP) High</td>
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<td>Root code description</td>
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<td>Political vs. military nature</td>
<td>the balance between the Alliance's political and military dimensions</td>
<td>(PM) Balance</td>
<td>Balanced activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(PM) Imbalance – skewed towards military</td>
<td>Activity skewed towards military</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(PM) Imbalance – skewed towards political</td>
<td>Activity skewed towards political</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scenario probability</td>
<td>how probable is a particular prognosis/scenario (in the view of its author(s))</td>
<td>(SP) High probability</td>
<td>«Скорее всего», «Вероятнее всего» – Between 60% and 90%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(SP) Low probability</td>
<td>«Возможно», «Может быть» – Between 10% and 60%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(SP) Very high probability</td>
<td>“Будет” – Greater than 90%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(SP) Very low probability</td>
<td>«Маловероятно», «(Почти) невероятно» – Less than 10%</td>
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<td>Standpoint in relation to other bodies</td>
<td>what are the prognosed relations of NATO with a state/organization</td>
<td>(S) To a country</td>
<td>what are the prognosed relations of NATO with a state</td>
<td>(S)(C) Accession</td>
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<td>(S)(C) Armed conflict</td>
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<td>(S)(C) Competition</td>
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<td>(S)(C) Conflict</td>
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<td>(S)(C) Cooperation</td>
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<td>(S)(C) Deterrence</td>
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<td>(S)(C) Walkout</td>
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<td>(S) To an organization</td>
<td>what are the prognosed relations of NATO with an organization</td>
<td>(S)(O) Competition</td>
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<td>(S)(O) Conflict</td>
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<td>(S)(O) Cooperation</td>
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<td>(S)(O) Substitution (NATO ➔ Organization)</td>
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<td>(S) To which country or organization</td>
<td>which country/organization is mentioned in the excerpt</td>
<td>(S)(W) Afghanistan</td>
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<td>(S)(W) Intrastate bodies</td>
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<td>(S)(W) UN</td>
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<td>(S)(W) United European Army</td>
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<td>(S)(W) Unspecified global actors</td>
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<td>Transatlantic link</td>
<td>the strength of the link – both political and operational – between American and European Allies (inside NATO)</td>
<td>(TL) Trajectory</td>
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<td>(UL)(VP) Weak</td>
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<td>US leadership and credibility</td>
<td>the extent to which the United States remains engaged in NATO and willing to assume a leadership role</td>
<td>(UL) Trajectory</td>
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<td>(UL)(VF) Stronger than Europe</td>
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<td>(UL)(VF) Weaker than Europe</td>
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<td>(UL)(VP) Weak</td>
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<td>Will NATO survive</td>
<td>will NATO exist in the foreseeable future?</td>
<td>(NS) No</td>
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<td>(NS) Will die (undefined time)</td>
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<td>(NS) Will die in less than 10 years</td>
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<td>(NS) Will die in less than 5 years</td>
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<td>(NS) Yes</td>
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Annex 4: All results

The full list of customizable visualizations is available here.